THE

MADRAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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THE TAMBARAM ARENA*

In the prayer for former students which we use each Sunday we speak of 'the wider arena of life outside these College walls'. That use of the word 'arena' is an odd one. An arena was (and in some countries still is) a place where men fought with each other, and with wild beasts. The idea is that life outside these College walls is chiefly Blood and Sand: and inside these College walls? There seems to be the suggestion that here the arena is smaller, that the conflicts are less serious, that the tension is less than outside, less Blood and Sand, in fact.

This idea was confirmed in my mind by two friends, one closely connected with the College and the other not, who both referred a short while back to Tambaram as a quiet backwater. Whether that is so, whether the remarks were complimentary or not, that was how the life of this place struck two people from outside.

My thoughts on this matter were disturbed from another source. I read in a sheet addressed to students that the modern student suffers acutely—more than others, it was implied,—from the pressure of the new knowledge of our time, the economic distress and political upheavals in the midst of which we live. Tambaram had ceased to be a backwater and had become a troubled sea, broken by winds and storms from all quarters—almost a cyclone, we might say.

How are we to judge between these differing views as to the kind of life we live here? I can only state my own view which is fairly clear as between these differences. In this narrower arena of life inside these College walls, some of the tension of life has been eased, we do in fact escape some of the more dreadful conflicts of the world outside. When the College was a-building, the first thing we did was to put three miles of fencing around us—a sort of symbol of the life we were going to lead. True, since that time the fencing has been shortened by the intrusion of alien interests, but it remains that we live in a green and pleasant land, even though we have not yet built Jerusalem here.

Within that fence we do escape some of the conflicts outside. War has not reached us, despite our black-out and the noise of friendly bombers. We are tolerably well fed and we have never gone short; our food situation has never been anything like what has been happening to people we know outside. We have continued to go to lectures, to play games, to have Hall Days and tea parties when the world outside is violently disturbed by war, economic distress, political upheaval, under a cloud of doom and uncertainty. It may all end suddenly, but it has not ended yet and we go on. This, of course, is a wartime picture, but even in peace-time a College was in some ways a place of escape from the pressures and tensions of the outside world, somewhat artificial and unreal, but to most a very pleasant mode of existence. We are indeed children of privilege.

* Address at the College Commemoration Service on 4th February 1944, by Mr. E. J. Bingle.

How are we to justify our escape, over against that grim world outside? Presumably we can only justify our privilege by what we do, by the way we do it, by the kind of values we cherish in doing it. What are these things, these values?

Well, we spend the larger part of our day at lectures, at labs and books. I know people assure you that life is not all lectures or books or labs—perhaps it is not, in that wider arena outside, but here it is. Why do we do these things? The most obvious reason is that you hope to pass some university examination; for some, perhaps many, that seems adequate—which explains why many find the business of learning so dull and difficult. These buildings, these labs, our libraries with their 25,000 books, do stand for something more than passing examinations. They are the outward symbols of a love of learning as valuable in itself which this College exists to encourage. Moreover it is only in such places that you will find knowledge valued in this way. You won't find it so in the arena outside. There some kinds of knowledge may be immediately useful, for war or for commerce, but knowledge as a kind of love, an infatuation even—no, not there. You may say that it is not very widespread here—the more is the pity, the greater the measure of our failure. At any rate, the buildings around you, the divisions of day and night, time-tables and all the rest bear witness to the belief that it is good for a privileged few to spend a few years of life devoted to literature, science, history, to love them for themselves; which is only another way of saying that here we learn to understand and love the world in which we live, not merely to use it. That is one value of this place, however difficult you find it to believe.

Another value we cherish is of a different kind. Those of you who are in the Intermediate classes have to attend compulsory physical training, while for those who are under no compulsion there is, we pride ourselves, ample accommodation for playing most kinds of games. The reasons for this are more than one. It is obvious that we need to keep our bodies in order and train them. But that could probably be done more quickly and thoroughly than by our present methods, if that were all. There are other things we are getting at. One is that we value physical excellence as a good in itself, as today's sports bear witness. Another is that we cherish team-games in particular as somehow specially good.

Here we have something which takes us back to our beginning; we have here the arena again, wide enough for a football pitch at any rate. Here we practise conflict, sharp, vigorous, deadly—till the whistle blows. What is the difference between this arena and the wider arena outside? One reason is that we do these things for fun, but that is not all. The secret is that conflict is not abolished, but that people who oppose each other can also be friends in their conflict. It is said that the greatest triumph of the General Strike in Britain in 1926, when four million men went on strike, was to see football matches played between the police and the strikers. We distinguish between League and friendly matches; surely that is a fatal distinction. Unless all matches are friendly matches the game is not worth it; our arena has become too much like that wider arena outside. At any rate, here is one of our values enshrined in a daily activity.

There is another matter on which I speak with great hesitation. Anybody who has listened, as I have, to many speeches by old boys of this College will know that they refer only too frequently to one subject—the importance of character. This College, they say, has made us what we are. Not learning, not games but character-building is the business of this College, of this sheltered life we lead. Character by mass-production is our aim; all of which makes one very doubtful. Let us admit the facts. No one can stay here for four years in this sort of atmosphere leading

this sort of life without some change occurring to him. He may leave this College a better or a worse person than he entered it; it is hardly likely that he will be unchanged. But beyond that we need to be careful. Character is not what is done to you, but what you do to and with things and persons. There is a freedom in each man which we cannot touch and have no right to manipulate by mass-production. Moreover, character comes from conflict and tension; but here we seek to ease the conflict in this narrower arena. Character, said a German poet, is formed in the stream of the world, not in quiet backwaters. You have not begun to face fully the issues of character till you find yourself outside College, earning your own living and facing the world as you find it.

There is something else, even more serious. Character is what a man does in the conflict, not what happens to him. But a man who has made his own character is a very dangerous person, in sight of perdition. The self-made man, said Sidney Smith, takes a great responsibility off the Almighty. A man's character is in the last resort not what he does, but what he is prepared to let God do with him. Our faith is that character must spring from our relation to God who came in a human life, in Jesus Christ, who was crucified for our sins, and who rose again from the dead. Whatever that means it is hardly something which can be taught or mass-produced: it is something to be believed. If the challenge of the Divine Love nailed to a cross of wood, offering us forgiveness, redemption, peace with God and the promise of ultimate triumph with Christ—if that meets us here, its validity for us has still to be tested in that wider arena outside, where men fight with beasts. The ultimate test of character does not lie here.

We are met here today not merely to remember what this College stands for, but also the men who made it, who shaped it to its God-given purpose. Their names, some of them, are known to some of you. Some of us have known a few personally. But for all of us, the great mass of people who made this College and still help to support it remains unknown. Though we may not know their names, we do know something of their motive. What they did was not simply because they thought education a good thing; they had something other than that in mind. Nor was it because they thought to acquire some special merit or reputation, some spiritual gain by so doing. They were men to whom the love of God in Christ had become so real that they must do this in gratitude to Him who had done so much for them, that others might come to know Him and to be known of Him. It has sometimes been asserted that we have no right to call ourselves a Christian College. At any rate if we have regard to those who made this College what it is, then it can be truly called Christian. That was *their* motive.

Today we commemorate them and give thanks. We may not all share their faith; our educational ideals are not always quite the same as theirs. We sometimes seem in danger of neglecting the values which are embodied here. Today as we remember them let us catch something of their meaning, something of the purpose embodied in these buildings and books and playing fields. We associate commemoration with our Annual Sports; the symbolism is surely that we are links in a chain of traditions which will continue after our time. We have received richly of a great tradition; it is ours to make it or to deface it, to hand it on richer or poorer to those who will come after us. God grant that we may make our decision aright.

THE PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1943-44

The customary date for the celebration of the College Day has many advantages, but one minor disadvantage of meeting in January is that the Principal's report must always deal with a calendar year, and can never deal with three terms in their proper order. A dramatic action, says Aristotle, must be a whole, and a whole is that which consists of a beginning, a middle, and an end. But it is a special feature of this report that it deals with the end, the beginning, and the middle, in that order, and cannot in the nature of the case do otherwise.

The first notable event of the third term of 1942-43 was the College Day, which brought to Tambaram a gratifyingly large number of former students, and produced the usual feast of eloquent, and (occasionally) imaginative reminiscence, a feast which was not less appreciated because there was a suggestion of war-time economy in the smaller number of courses. After the College Day, there was an unusually serious outbreak of Hall Days, the three Halls having chosen three consecutive Saturdays for their annual celebrations, which were as happy and as interesting as anything of the kind we have ever had in Tambaram. And after the Hall Days, the Sports! I am not myself in favour of taking too seriously the purely competitive element in athletics, and the anxious calculation of points, but it must be admitted that the keen and successful struggle to overthrow the existing régime and create a New Order in Tambaram athletics did give a great stimulus to training, so that it was hardly a surprise when six new College records were created and our College team went on to win the intercollegiate championship for the fourth year in succession. After those athletic days, when even the sick, the infirm, and the aged could be seen painfully dragging themselves evening by evening to the arena, there would normally have been an epidemic of photographs and farewell tea parties, but, as everybody knows, events decided otherwise, and February was a month of more serious preoccupations, culminating in a period of painful anxiety and suspense.

And, after that, the University examinations! It might have been expected that the candidates of 1943 would be less successful than those of previous years. They had undergone many vicissitudes. In February 1942, a perhaps too grandmotherly University had hurried them off to their homes when they ought to have been appearing for their college examinations; in the first term of the following year; there had been even more serious interruptions; and their final term had come to a close in an atmosphere of excitement and suspense. It certainly would not have been surprising if their performance in University examinations had been less satisfactory than those of previous years. But in fact the very opposite happened. In the Intermediate Examination, 70 per cent of our candidates passed completely—a higher percentage than in any previous year except 1942, and relatively better than the figure for that year—and for the first time in our history there were actually more First Classes than Second Classes. At the other end of the academic scale, the success of the Honours candidates was equally striking, 10 being placed in the First Class and 18 in the Second Class as against 12 in the Third Class. In the various groups of the B.A. Examination, the results were on the whole satisfactory, while in the B.Sc. Examination no fewer than 62 out of 71 candidates passed, 31 of them in the

First or Second Class. I cannot refrain from remarking that I think the candidates of 1944 will have to make a very strenuous effort if they are to maintain the standards of their predecessors. It looks as if the circumstances of the latter part of 1942 had had a more serious effect on the then junior students than on their seniors, and my feeling is that the handicap of a bad start has not yet been overcome.

At the end of the academic year 1942-43, we prepared to bid farewell to two members of the teaching staff who had served the College for many years, Mr. M. S. Sabhesan and Mr. J. D. Asirvadam. Mr. Sabhesan, however, has, owing to special circumstances, continued for an extra year among us, while, as it happens, Mr. Asirvadam is returning to the fold next week to help us, for the remainder of the term, to meet an unexpected emergency. So the time has perhaps not yet arrived for valedictory remarks. Those to whom we actually said goodbye were Mr. A. F. Thyagaraju, who left us for Guntur after five years of valued service in the English Department, Mr. T. N. Venkatanathachari, to whom we now offer our good wishes on his appointment as Professor of Botany in the Presidency College, and Mr. J. P. Manikkam who, having put us deeply in his debt by giving us five years of honorary service, after his retirement, transferred his allegiance in July 1943 to the Annamalai University. We took an appropriate revenge, however, on our sister-institution, for we constrained her to yield up our own former student Mr. P. Kesava Menon for our Mathematics Department, and, along with him, Mr. P. S. Varadachari, to fill the Physics vacancy. Two other former students also rejoined us, Mr. S. P. Adinarayan, as Professor of Philosophy, and Mr. K. R. Chandrasekharan as Lecturer in English, while Mr. A. M. Varki came from Alwaye to spend a year among us as Visiting Professor of English. (Unfortunately, a breakdown in health has compelled Mr. Varki to leave us after only two terms in our midst, and I am sure he has the sympathy and good wishes of us all.)

In addition to our regular staff, which is, I believe, when all are reckoned, the largest staff possessed by any college in our University, we have in reserve an imposing reservoir of feminine learning. We are grateful for services rendered to the Mathematics Department in an honorary capacity by Mrs. Varki, to the English Department by Mrs. Adiseshiah and Mrs. Macnicol,—who has also acted throughout the year as Honorary Warden for women students—and to various struggling students of French by Mrs. Bingle. All these ladies have generously given us their assistance, and others have helped us in other ways, despite the fact that the Union Society at a recent meeting decided by an overwhelming majority to relegate women permanently to the kitchen.

When the College reopened in July, there were about 950 students on the rolls—too large a number—and yet more applicants had been turned away than in any previous year. For the 200 places in the Junior Intermediate Class, there were over 800 applications before registration closed, and for the 250 vacancies in the Degree classes, there were over 900 applicants. It would probably be a good thing if the total number of students were somewhat smaller, but it is easier to impose a limit in theory than in practice. The figures laid down in advance for all the science groups are being adhered to, and no increase in the size of the Intermediate or Pass Degree classes has been permitted, but there has been a rapid growth in the number of Honours students in Mathematics, Economics, and English, for which no absolute maximum is laid down, and in fact we have a far larger total of Honours students now than at any previous time.

A word or two on finance may perhaps at this point be relevant, lest it be imagined that increased numbers solve all financial problems. In former years,

there used to be a stock sentence in this report to the effect that we were grateful to the Contributing Societies overseas, and to the Government of Madras for their continued support. We have special reason at this time to be grateful to the Contributing Societies which have continued, during all the troubled years of war, to make contributions sufficient for the maintenance of eight or nine professors. The Government of Madras also has continued its support, and we are not unmindful of the fact that it contributed almost half of the large amount required to house us in our present home. Of recent years, however, there has been a progressive decrease in the amount of our annual grant, and this gives ground for great uneasiness. The annual expenditure of the College, over and above what is received by way of fees, is seldom less than Rs. 90,000 and has usually been much more. To help towards meeting this deficit, we could until about ten years ago count on an annual grant from Government of approximately Rs. 40,000 and on generous equipment grants. But the annual grant has gradually dwindled to little more than Rs. 20,000 and equipment-grants are now exiguous and infrequent. The result is that, despite the theory of the Grant-in-Aid Code, more than 75 per cent of the deficit has to be borne by the management, and many desirable academic developments are consequently barred.

I must now concentrate into a few closing words all the other things I have to say to you, and it is, therefore, impossible to dwell on the work of the various societies within the College and in the villages around. The year 1943 has been a happy year, despite one period of gloom, and life in Tambaram has been full of varied interest and activity. The value of our work it is hardly for us to judge. I know that, by living together and working together and worshipping together, we in Tambaram have been breaking down barriers, and building bridges. The further issues are beyond our power to determine, and, so long as we play our small part faithfully, we may well be content to leave them in the sure hands of God.

COLLEGE CHURCH

Preachers, Third Term—1943-44

Jan. 9	...	Rev. R. S. Macnicol.
16	...	Rev. T. G. Platten.
23	...	Rev. M. S. Adiseshiah, Ph.D.
30	...	Rev. J. R. Macphail.
Feb. 6	...	Rev. Dr. H. H. Tsui.
13	...	Dr. David F. Baxter.
20	...	Rev. A. J. Boyd.
27	...	Rev. G. P. Gibbens.
Mar. 5	...	Mr. E. J. Bingle.

At the Commemoration Service on February 4th the preacher was Mr. Bingle.

Dr. Tsui is the General Secretary of the Church of Christ in China.

THREE LECTURES ON SHAKESPEARE'S MORALS

III. TRAGEDY: THE CASE OF HAMLET

Hamlet came near the middle of Shakespeare's twenty wonderful years of play-writing, and it seems to me that for all its sadness and terror there is still a morning freshness in it. The bustle and excitement, the energy and many-sidedness, and even the frequent cynicism and bewilderment are youthful. King Lear and Antony and Cleopatra, in their different ways, have a noon-splendour, and at the end of the list A Winter's Tale and The Tempest have the charm of a long summer evening. But if I had to choose one play of Shakespeare's to keep my mind awake in old age, it would be Hamlet. And as we come now to consider what Shakespeare made of tragedy (or what tragedy made of Shakespeare), I will take Hamlet for the text. Once again let us first remind ourselves of the actual story.

It is midnight on the battlements of Elsinore, the Danish royal palace. It is dark and cold. The sentries are jumpy; for two nights now they have seen the ghost of the late king, and they have persuaded an officer, Horatio, to watch with them. Just as he is explaining to them that ghosts don't exist, the ghost stalks past them and vanishes in silence. Horatio is convinced, and wonders what it may mean. 'A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye,' he says; and adds

> In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
> A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
> The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
> Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

While he still speaks the ghost reappears. He at once asks urgently what is wrong and what is going to happen; but though they all try to hold it by force, it vanishes in silence once more. They decide that they must tell young Hamlet, the late king's son.

It is the best opening scene in Shakespeare, exciting in itself and making us wonder what will happen next. But I must break off for a word of discussion. Shakespeare seems to assume that the spirits of the dead can revisit the earth, and give knowledge to mortals that they could not get otherwise. (To be strict, the ghosts and witches in Shakespeare never put anything entirely new into men's minds: they only confirm some suspicion or resolution already present, though not yet effective.) Later, he also assumes that if a man dies without proper attention from a priest (in the sacrament called the Last Unction), he will suffer torment for it in the next world; and that if a man is murdered, his son is bound to avenge him. No one in the play questions any of these three assumptions. Perhaps we do; and perhaps Shakespeare himself did: but story-telling is a curious kind of game with rules of its own, and one of them is that the story-teller may assume practically anything he pleases, on condition only that the story so founded is consistent and interesting. Pretend that so-and-so happened, he says, though in fact it couldn't happen; then this is what would follow.

Next we see the first Council of the new king, Claudius. Claudius has married Gertrude, the widow of the late king, his brother. Marriage with a dead brother's widow is forbidden by the Church, and apart from that this marriage has been so hasty as to be indecent; but the courtiers pretend not to notice. Claudius is also a usurper. Shakespeare doesn't make this explicit, and he doesn't tell us how Claudius managed it. But an Elizabethan audience would assume, unless told something else, that the crown should have gone to the son. Prince Hamlet is in college in Germany, and has taken leave to attend his father's funeral. Alone among the festive flattering courtiers, he still wears full mourning. He wants to return. Claudius and Gertrude both speak graciously, as if trying to make up for wronging him, and ask him to stay. He submits listlessly; but as soon as he is alone, we hear a wild outburst of misery. His dead father, whom he adored, forgotten by all; his mother rushing shamelessly into marriage with a gross drunken man whom he despises, a man forbidden to her, in any case, by man's law and God's; himself cheated out of his inheritance!

> O God, God!
> How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
> Seem to me all the uses of this world!

And at this moment Horatio and the sentries come to say that they saw his father's ghost the night before. Hamlet, wild with excitement, joy, and foreboding, promises to watch with them the same night. 'I doubt some foul play,' he says. And he finds it. The ghost appears a fourth time, and beckons Hamlet away from the others. They try to hold Hamlet back.

Here I must interrupt with more discussion. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that few people go straight to hell or heaven after death: most of them pass to an intermediate state called Purgatory, and may spend ages there on probation. And in the bad period before the Reformation and Counter-reformation, some priests would undertake to get a dead man off so many years or centuries of Purgatory by saying so many prayers for his soul, of course at so much a prayer charged to his relatives. At the Reformation the Protestants declared that they had abolished Purgatory altogether. But the Church had always taught that it was only souls still in Purgatory who could revisit the earth as ghosts. Some Protestants therefore abolished ghosts as well as Purgatory; ghosts, they declared, were not the spirits of the dead, they must be phantoms sent by Satan to ensnare men. It was a curious controversy, and in Shakespeare's time very much alive.

Hamlet however decides to follow the ghost, even though it may be a devil's trick.

> Why, what should be the fear?
> I do not set my life at a pin's fee:
> And for my soul, what can it do to that,
> Being a thing immortal as itself?

And he breaks free, and rushes away so quickly that the others lose sight of him. When they are alone, the ghost tells him it is indeed the spirit of his father in Purgatory, murdered by Claudius with no time allowed for the Last Unction: also that before his death Gertrude had committed adultery with Claudius. And Hamlet, thrilled, shocked, agonised as he is, can also say 'O my prophetic soul! my uncle!' He had suspected something of the sort already, instinctively. The ghost,

demanding to be avenged, fades as morning approaches, with 'Hamlet, remember me!' Hamlet's mind is reeling; he is afraid he is going mad: with all his might he holds on to the one thought, summed up in the ghost's last word 'Remember me'.

The others now catch him up. He is not yet composed in mind, and his strange conduct dismays them. Instantly—for his mind works at great speed—he foresees that he may again lose control of himself before Claudius, and that Claudius, with his bad conscience, may suspect that somehow his secret is out. He has a formidable and desperate man against him, and has no mind to die like his father, at least till his father's command is obeyed. And he decides to pretend to be mad altogether, so that involuntary slips may pass unnoticed. He makes Horatio and the others swear solemnly that they will never divulge what they have seen, and that if he behaves oddly in the future they will pretend to know no more about him than any-one else.

This concludes Act I. When the story is resumed, some weeks have passed. Hamlet has made most people think him mad. His mother, though she is absorbed in her monstrous infatuation for her brother-husband, is grieved; Claudius is guiltily uneasy. The Lord Chamberlain, Polonius, a fussy old man, vain and obstinate, is sure that he knows why Hamlet is mad: it is unrequited love for Polonius's daughter Ophelia. Hamlet had recently shown an interest in her; Polonius, aware of the difference of rank, had ordered her to refuse to see him again—and this came soon after the wedding. Hamlet has been to see her once, in spite of her refusal, behaving with distraction, like the conventional unhappy lover. Probably he was play-acting deliberately, knowing that Ophelia would tell Polonius (the unhappy girl has no mother) and that Polonius would draw the conclusions he does draw, and would stick to them fanatically. But Claudius and Gertrude are not convinced; and they test Hamlet further by sending for two college friends of his, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, hoping that in frank talk with them he may let slip his real secret, if any. Hamlet is delighted to see them, but at once guesses that they are here by the king's management, and he makes them confess that he is right; but they confess so reluctantly that he regards them henceforward as his enemies.

In one way they help him unconsciously: they have brought with them a company of players whom he knows well, hoping to distract him with them; for Hamlet loves the theatre as well as Falstaff does. With his usual swiftness of mind, Hamlet decides to use them to try the king. He remembers a tragedy which includes a scene something like the actual murder of his father: let them act that before the king, and by watching the king carefully he will know whether he is guilty or not.

> The play's the thing
> Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

Before the show he meets Ophelia again, by a scheme of Polonius's, Polonius and the king eavesdropping. Hamlet once again sees through the trick played on him, and thinking that Ophelia also is on the enemy's side, he concludes that all women are as false as his mother and Ophelia. Terribly afraid of all the harm he can imagine her as suffering, or doing, he bids her seek refuge from the wicked world in a nunnery, speaking now sadly, now with wild anger. 'Go to, I'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages; those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a

nunnery, go!' This is spoken against the king, of course, and the king himself hears it, and is alarmed.

> There's something in his soul
> O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
> And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
> Will be some danger.

Hamlet had better be removed to a safe distance; and the king decides to send him on an important mission to England.

But first comes the play, 'The Murder of Gonzago'. Hamlet coaches the players most carefully, and bids Horatio, his only friend, watch the king with him. And his test succeeds brilliantly: as soon as the players come to the murder, Claudius leaps to his feet, crying 'Give me some light! Away!' and rushes from the hall. Hamlet now knows his man: and the relief makes him half-crazy. While he still exults, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern come from the Queen to bid him go to her at once; and after bantering them weirdly for a while he says, with profound and bitter irony 'We shall obey, were she ten times our mother'. He stays a moment to triumph over them: he has succeeded so far in his plans despite them and everyone else. He asks them to play on one of the actors' recorders (a recorder is like a flute), and when they confess that they don't know how, he shouts at them 'You would play upon me: . . . you would pluck out the heart of my mystery: . . . 's blood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?' He also makes game of Polonius for a little: then he goes to his mother, with a prayer that he may not kill her (he doubts his mastery of himself to that extent), but resolved to show her the evil that she has done and is still doing till she repents.

On his way to his mother's room, however, Hamlet comes on Claudius, alone, unarmed, and unconscious of his surroundings: he is kneeling in prayer to God, for grace to repent. This is the very crisis of the play. Hamlet draws his sword: and after a brief pause he sheathes it again and goes on to his mother. Claudius knows nothing of all this. The reason that Hamlet gives to himself for sparing Claudius is that the king is praying, and if he is killed now he will go straight to heaven, by-passing the Purgatory in which King Hamlet still suffers torment. The murder must be put off till Claudius is 'about some act that has no relish of salvation in it'. The irony of it is that Claudius is not praying at all: he is trying to, but with all his faults he is not a fool or a hypocrite, and he knows that unless he gives up the crown, which he has no intention of, he cannot pray for pardon.

There has been much discussion about this. Dr. Johnson perhaps began it, with the solemn sentence; 'This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or uttered.' Others have sought some hidden motive, sure that Hamlet's words are only an excuse. But this can't be allowed. Hamlet is practically speaking in soliloquy, and it is an unbroken convention in Elizabethan drama that when a man speaks in soliloquy, he means what he says. And though Dr. Johnson's words may be true, still Hamlet's thought is almost a commonplace in the literature of the time: many good men are represented as contriving the damnation as well as the death of their enemies. We may hope that they didn't mean it. But we must realize that Hamlet would have killed Claudius but for this thought. Hamlet belongs to the sixteenth century, not to the twentieth.

The interview between Hamlet and his mother starts badly. Polonius, who loves eavesdropping, has hidden himself behind the curtains. Hamlet begins so violently that his mother cries out in alarm: Polonius echoes the cry: and Hamlet without reflection whips out his sword and kills him—thinking it is the king. When he draws the curtain and finds Polonius, he merely says 'I took thee for thy better', and forgets about him. He then addresses the Queen, vehemently, and at last she sees the horror of what she has done; for she is a shallow sentimental creature but has not intended evil. At the same time the ghost appears again to Hamlet, 'to whet his almost blunted purpose'. Hamlet has done half of what he set out to do: he has won his mother out of the lies and softness into which Claudius has enticed her (though her reformation doesn't last long). Meanwhile the unlucky killing of Polonius has given Claudius an advantage: he has a good reason for sending Hamlet away; and he despatches him the same night to England, with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, with secret letters requiring the English king to execute Hamlet at once. But the plan miscarries. Hamlet knows that Claudius is planning mischief, and on board the ship, on a sudden impulse, he steals the secret letter and reads it. He forges another which says that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern must be put to death, not himself; and then as it happens he escapes, during a brush with pirates, and soon is back in Denmark. But Claudius, a cunning strategist, has a second plan ready. Polonius's son Laertes, scenting something fishy about his father's death, raises a rabble and demands satisfaction. And while he faces the king, he learns that his sister Ophelia, who was driven mad by her father's death coming on top of her other troubles, has been drowned by accident, or by her own will. Claudius convinces Laertes that Hamlet is solely responsible for Polonius's death, and has no difficulty in getting Laertes resolute to murder Hamlet, and to do it in a most unchivalrous way. He is to challenge Hamlet to a fencing-match, himself using a sharp sword, by a trick, while Hamlet has the usual blunted one. Laertes adds a further touch of villainy: he will smear his weapon with deadly poison. And to make everything quite sure, Claudius will have a poisoned cup of wine ready.

The last scene opens with the excitement and the formal ceremonies of a courtly fencing-match: on the one side Hamlet, careless, generous, and with a strange sense of foreboding to which he refuses to pay any heed; and on the other the crafty murderous king and Laertes burning with a thirst for revenge. Hamlet goes through the preliminaries with his usual quick and brilliant grace; he refuses to examine the rapiers, taking Laertes' word for it that all is well. Only the king, Laertes, and the audience know what threatens. In the first bout Hamlet touches Laertes with his blunted weapon; and Claudius, nervous in spite of very strong nerves, offers him a cup of wine—the poisoned cup—but Hamlet puts it by. The second bout also goes to Hamlet; and the Queen—who by the way seems to have forgotten the soul-searching talk she had with Hamlet after the play—comes forward and offers Hamlet her handkerchief to wipe his brow; then, with characteristic good-nature and self-indulgence combined, she takes a cup of wine and drinks to his success. It is the cup prepared by Claudius for Hamlet. But before the poison takes effect, the third bout begins. Laertes this time manages to touch Hamlet lightly; Hamlet sees that he bleeds, knows that Laertes is playing foul, and loses his temper: he closes with him, a scuffle follows; Hamlet gets Laertes' rapier into his hand, and with a courteous bow offers his own in exchange. Laertes cannot think of an excuse and takes it; the fencing begins anew, and Hamlet hits Laertes fair and square, wounding him deeply. Laertes drops at once; and at the same moment the Queen falls to the ground, crying out that the wine was poisoned.

Laertes, at death's door, confesses part of the plot, and Hamlet instantly guesses the rest; without reflecting he runs the king through, and with savage irony forces between his teeth, as he lies dying, the dregs of the poisoned wine. And last of all Hamlet himself dies, with the mysterious words 'The rest is silence'.

In my summary I have had to leave out a good deal, for Hamlet is much the longest and most crowded of the plays: I once saw a performance without cuts, and it took over six hours. And at many points I have given only one interpretation out of many. This too is necessary. Hamlet has been for a century and a half a happy hunting-ground for every kind of crank and windbag. 'There are thousands and thousands of books about Shakespeare,' says Pearsall Smith, 'and most of them are mad.' He might have added that the maddest are all about Hamlet. I can't possibly discuss all the views that have been held; but I can't quite avoid controversy either.

The prevalent view about Hamlet, I think, is that the mystery of the play is in the mind of Hamlet, and that the interest lies in tracking to its source there the cause of Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius. The first in this field was Goethe, in his great novel *Wilhelm Meister*. Hamlet, says Goethe, is too delicate for the rough task thrust on him; he is a sensitive moralist ahead of his time, revolting half-consciously against the practical implications of the primitive law 'An eye for an eye'. 'A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero,' who 'sinks beneath a burden he cannot bear and must not throw away . . . . There is an oaktree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered.' Goethe can find beautiful and telling illustrations in Hamlet's words; but he has forgotten some of them. Hamlet talking to Ophelia, or to his own mother; Hamlet running through a defenceless and harmless old man by mistake, and barely apologising; Hamlet forging a letter to send two college-friends to their death, and telling what he has done with glee; such a man is not too gentle or refined for the task imposed on him. Indeed it is painfully interesting, as the story proceeds, to watch how callous and cruel he grows.

Coleridge about the same time was talking in much the same way: he gives a long and fascinating analysis of Hamlet's character, making him out to be very like Coleridge; and in fact he says artlessly, in the course of the discussion, 'I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so.' Quiller-Couch answers this by pointing out Hamlet's practical good sense in arranging the play, his boldness and speed in the fight with the pirates, his coolness and skill in the fencing-match: and he says 'Imagine Coleridge doing any of these things'. He tells us what Coleridge would have done 'if *his* murdered father had arisen to him from the grave and enjoined revenge. . . . First of all he would have searched his pockets for his tablets, which were not there; next, to advance his fell purpose, he would have borrowed £5 at least off Horatio; and thereupon he would have wandered off to live with someone else . . . and talked about what he was going to do, until—at the end of twenty years or so—he discussed it with equal prolixity as an accomplished fact.' No: Hamlet is not a Coleridge: normally he is bold, resolute, and swift to act. That is the impression made by all Hamlet's deeds and words, borne out by everything that other characters say about him. When the point of a play is that the hero is irresolute and unpractical, as in Shakespeare's *Richard II* or Marlowe's *Edward II*, the general impression is very different.

There is a better character-study than either of these—more searching, more sympathetic—in Bradley: it is one of the finest things in his very fine book. Hamlet

adores his father; as often as he speaks of him he soars into the noblest poetry: that is the starting-point. While he is weakened and depressed by his grief at the sudden death of that father—happening while he was far away—there comes a new and more dreadful shock: his mother marries again within a few weeks, and marries Claudius. Claudius has some good points; he is dignified, capable, brave: he is also gross and sensual, and a drunkard, and we may guess that Hamlet has always disliked and despised him. And besides Hamlet believes that the marriage is incestuous, shocking and unclean. He finds it unthinkable that his mother should so forget her husband and herself. 'Thrift, thrift,' he says bitterly to Horatio: they wanted to give the marriage-banquet while they could still use the remnants of food left over from the funeral. And then, on top of this, comes the revelation from the dead that his mother had been an adulteress, and that her paramour had murdered his father, 'no shriving-time allowed.' These repeated shocks unnerve and paralyse him, and he falls into listless melancholy varied by fits of hysterical excitement: and that is why he cannot bend his energies to the practical task which is his duty.

From this refined and subtle analysis it is a relief to turn to Edgar Elmer Stoll, the most amusing of Shakespeare scholars. Stoll seems to have read and remembered every play ever written, and one can't guess why; he gives no hint that he has enjoyed any of them, and he uses his enormous learning simply to prove that all other scholars are fools, or to use his own word 'blatherskites'. With this purpose he naturally returns to Hamlet again and again. And, he says, what's all the talk about? Why does Hamlet not kill Claudius at once? Why, of course, because if he did there would be no play. There are plenty of murder-and-revenge plays, especially Elizabethan ones, many of them with ghosts; and the hero always has to beat about the bush and put off time, or else the audience wouldn't get their money's worth. Most of the heroes curse themselves for dilatoriness. It is a dramatic convention, and Shakespeare follows it. As for Goethe & Co., if the meaning of Hamlet had to wait nearly 200 years to be discovered, it's a poor play. Stoll rages thrillingly, and does great damage: he does some good too, for no one who has read Stoll can say anything about Hamlet without thinking twice.

The simple answer to all this is that Hamlet is a popular play; the most popular play ever written, acted oftener and in more languages than any other. That is the difference between Hamlet and the other revenge-plays which Stoll refuses to see: Hamlet is remembered, and they are forgotten. And as for Goethe, Coleridge, Bradley, and the many others whom they represent, the play isn't popular only with expert psychologists and philosophers. The prince they analyse so subtly is loved and understood instantly by the simplest village audience, who certainly wouldn't understand a word of the learned explanations of him: who don't realize, in fact, that there is anything to explain! And it is Hamlet himself who makes the play so successful on the stage. There are many other good things in the play. Shakespeare is writing at the very top of his powers as a dramatist; he displays more consistently and more brilliantly than anywhere else the mysterious gift of the story-teller; he shows us incidents and situations so that they interest and excite us, or amuse, or frighten, or move to our depths; and he makes his imaginary people talk so that they seem to be real, and attract or repel us as real people do. Nobody can tell you how he does it: we can only accept the fact that Hamlet is packed with scenes and characters which engage our attention and sympathy with irresistible force. And they are closely linked together, following one another with unbroken speed. Some of them have little connexion with the main story, for example, Hamlet's talk with the players, and Ophelia's madness, and the episode in the churchyard

(when Hamlet returns from his voyage, ironically, the first thing he sees is Ophelia's funeral); but they *all light* him up, or are lit up by him. The main thing is Hamlet himself. There is no one in fiction whom we love so much, or identify ourselves with so wholly. No young man can come to know Hamlet without being somewhat affected in manner and in philosophy. And Stoll can't account for that, any more than Goethe & Co.

In truth the story of Hamlet is fairly simple and straightforward. Except for unimportant details, Shakespeare took it over from one of the vulgar revenge-plays that Stoll speaks about. Shakespeare doesn't tell it very well from the point of view of the student who sits down to dissect it at leisure. To the question for example how Hamlet passed the first few weeks after the appearance of the ghost, there is no answer. If Shakespeare had been writing a novel, he would have had to fill in details like that, and I have no doubt that he had the necessary ability. Even if he had known that his plays would be read far oftener than they are seen, like those of modern dramatists, he might have re-written it for publication, as they often do. But Shakespeare was writing for the theatre, and in the theatre we don't notice gaps like that. On the stage Hamlet never has a chance to kill Claudius, except once, when there is a good reason—good for an Elizabethan gentleman, though not perhaps for us—why he can't take it. As Dr. Johnson said, 'Hamlet is, throughout the whole play, rather an instrument than an agent.' He sets himself to a great and dangerous task; he has no doubt that it is his duty, and there seem to be no great obstacles in the way: but things go wrong. That's a trivial phrase, but it does just about sum up the story of Hamlet. Things go wrong: he is baffled again and again, without in the least knowing why; his best efforts are beaten back like the sea from a cliff. He becomes angry, bewildered, and sick of himself, of the world, and of life. He thinks himself a failure, and can't see how it is his fault. And in those wonderful soliloquies, searching and cursing himself, he puts into magical phrases the feeling that anyone has when things go wrong. He probes his own soul to the depths; and up to the heavens that seem dark and indifferent he casts swift glances as piercing as the beams of a searchlight. The business of analysing Hamlet was begun by Hamlet himself.

What is a man
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more;
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event—
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward—I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do',
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
To do 't.

Cause and will and strength and means to do 't,' implying that he had them from the first. He is continually trying to account to himself for his delay, and the various causes he thinks of are irreconcilable. He laments that he is 'dull and

muddy-pated' and 'peaks like John-a'-Dreams', is 'pigeon-livered' and 'lacks gall to make oppression bitter', and 'unpacks his heart with words'. He persuades himself that the only thing wrong is that he doubts the Ghost's word. He wonders whether he is paralysed by his fear of what may lie beyond death. Then he wants to damn Claudius as well as to kill him. And even after that he asks himself whether his inhibition is 'some craven scruple' or (contrariwise) 'bestial oblivion'; and almost at the end he speaks (for the first time) as if he has been unsure of his moral right to kill.

Such introspection is not the cause of Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius; it is the effect of it. And have the rest of us never felt as Hamlet does? He is a brilliant and lofty personage, richly endowed with outward privileges and inward gifts; he is a Prince, and a Prince Charming; above all, he has the gift of speech. Yet he is also Everyman: Everyman become articulate. His words go home to our hearts because so often they would come from our hearts if we could but speak! 'It is we who are Hamlet,' says Hazlitt. 'Whoever cannot be well at ease, while he sees evil hanging over him like a spectre, . . . to whom the universe is everything, and himself nothing . . .—this is the true Hamlet.' And Victor Hugo says 'I recognise my own brother. If sometimes we felt our own pulse, we should be conscious of his fever.'

Hamlet sees evil intruding into his universe; he tries to localise and then destroy it, but it spreads as he moves till he is like a man struggling in a quicksand, or it surrounds him like a magician's ring, paralysing him. The fever must run its course before Denmark can be healthy again. He starts acting as if he were the centre of the universe, and finds by many violent collisions that he is on the circumference; he can't do as he chooses according to his own lights; before knowing what he ought to do, he must discover by trial and error what he can do. He plans his life in the optimistic belief that

> So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low 'Thou must',
> The youth replies 'I can'.

And with great pain and loss he learns that he can't; that it is not he who settles what's possible and what isn't.

Have you ever tried to do anything worth doing. and succeeded? Perhaps you have: if so, tragedy has no message for you. It speaks to those who have found the word success irrelevant except in trifles; who have wanted to express some deep feeling or some high truth in words, or to make themselves wise and good, or to reform the world,—and have found that the farther they go the farther they have to go, and the more they do the more remains to be done. In all spiritual things—and spiritual means infinite—it is the one mark of growth, as Father Tyrrell said, to want more and more and to seem to get less and less.

In Hamlet, as I read it, we are face to face with something deeper than morality. Morality deals with the question whether a man is doing something good or something bad: but there is a prior question whether he can be said to be doing anything at all. The fundamental difference between men isn't that one behaves rightly and another wrongly, but that one strikes out into life with some independence, seeking and choosing and judging for himself, while another is content to be one of the crowd, to drift with the current or to go the way the wind blows. 'Living after all is

suffering; and if my main motive is only a half-conscious desire to escape danger and pain, I can hardly be said to live. The man who makes for a goal chosen by himself, by methods which commend themselves to his own conscience even if to no one else's, is bound at times to be most lonely, and to meet not once only with failure or disaster. And to the spectator, the upshot is either comedy or tragedy. If the hero's goal is something trivial, if his motive is vanity, if he sets out without even knowing himself thoroughly, and still more if he is timid or awkward when crossed, the rest of us find him entertaining, judging probably with some cruelty and much complacence. But if the hero attains a certain grandeur, especially in courage, we can't withhold our respect and sympathy. His theology, or even his morality, may be different from ours, as Hamlet's is; for I suppose that few of us believe in Purgatory or approve of private revenge, especially when it extends to damnation as well as murder. The hero may even be a thoroughly bad man, as Macbeth is. But he is trying to be himself, even when things go wrong, while the rest of us try to be everybody or nobody; and though we may keep at a safe distance ourselves, we give him our homage. The famous theories about 'the tragic error', it seems to me, don't go deep enough.

Hamlet tries to be himself with more energy and resourcefulness than most of us do; when things go wrong he tries harder to find out why; and when baffled and bewildered he shows more courage and steadiness. He doesn't give up the struggle in despair or cynicism, and he doesn't pretend to himself or others that things are better than they are. He is a perfect example of how to behave when things go wrong. And because he remains true to himself when everything and everybody seem to be turning against him, he has his reward. It isn't the half-accidental and outward reward that is dealt out by poetic justice: it is peace of mind. When things go wrong, he is at first angry and rebellious; but gradually comes reconcilement. Half way through, after killing Polonius, he says

> Heaven hath pleased it so
> To punish me with this—and this with me!—
> To be their scourge and minister.

An hour later he is told that he must go to England, and he says 'Good!' 'So is it,' says Claudius, 'if thou knewest our purposes.' And he replies gaily 'I see a cherub that sees them'. He doesn't know what is going to happen, though he must shrewdly suspect that Claudius is up to mischief: but he knows that a power above is in charge. He speaks more solemnly when he returns from the voyage to England. Telling Horatio how he suddenly decided to have a look at Claudius's letter, he says

> Let us know
> Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
> When our deep plots do pall; and that should learn us
> There's a divinity doth shape our ends
> Rough-hew them how we will.

The very accidents that enable him to forge a death-warrant for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern seem to him to be contrived with a good purpose by Divine Providence: 'Even in that was heaven ordinant'. A little later he confides in Horatio that he has some forebodings about the duel. Horatio wants him to withdraw, but he replies 'Not a whit: we defy augury. There is a special providence

in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come: if it be not to come, it will be now: if it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all. Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows what is't to leave betimes, let be.' In that mind he goes forward, and dies. And his strange last words, 'The rest is silence,' whatever they mean, are surely the utterance of a mind at peace with itself, and with the world, and with all that lies beyond the world.

Tragedy isn't just an accident happening to somebody nice: it is the conflict that arises whenever a man refuses, in a noble spirit, to accept the limitations that hamper any great effort, and struggling and suffering, breaks through into a larger world. And when a poet tells such a story, he opens our eyes to see that such a conflict is worth the cost, whatever it may be.

Note.—In the lecture I have given some indication of what I think of several writers on Hamlet. To my regret I could not conveniently introduce references to Harley Granville-Barker or J. Dover Wilson. Wilson's work has been principally on the text, but he has written a most interesting volume of general criticism, 'What happens in Hamlet' (an admirable title); and his wide reading in the literature of the time, of all sorts, enables him to settle many points long doubtful, such as the status of Claudius, the *bona fides* of the Ghost, and the details of the duel. Barker's long and distinguished career as actor, actor-manager, and dramatist, as well as much sound literary scholarship, makes his book at least equally valuable in another way; and in particular he shows that Shakespeare was no hit-or-miss artist who sometimes did well by chance without knowing why. Shakespeare was a skilful and painstaking craftsman who understood and respected his chosen medium. It is a great gain when a man who can act can also read and write! I am sorry to add that both Wilson and Barker maintain that Hamlet was constitutionally addicted to procrastination, and that we are meant to blame him for it.

J. R. MACPHAIL.

EVENING PRAYER

ON BOOKS AND BOOKISHNESS

By B. P. R. Vithal, *Class I, Gr. ii*

We live in an age of books—books ranging from 'penny-dreadfuls' to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, as bulky as the British Empire; from the glamorous cine magazine to the cold journal of science. The bell and the candle have gone but the book still remains to swear by, whether in the examination hall or the court room. There are purveyors of books, purchasers of books and perusers of books. The first is an ambitious and shrewd class, the second a gullible or vainglorious lot and the third a studious and hypocritical set. The shrewdest man is he who can peruse a book without purchasing it from the purveyors. But the pride of possession is such that the sense of shrewdness is overcome and the publisher or purveyor can sell his books to anyone under the slogan of democratisation of knowledge. I exclude from all these varieties that vast group of tormented parents who under stress of forceful circumstances are compelled year after year to buy books by the bag-load for their school-going children. If they are note-books, they outlast by eighty per cent of their volume the time of nine months but cannot be carried forward like the businessman's books. If they are text-books, they become out of date and so cannot be passed on to the next-of-kin or indigent friends. Even knowledge must pass along the road of fashion and fetish! At home both become a problem for the housewife intent on keeping a small house clean.

At one end the printed book was made a possibility by John Gultenberg of Mainz, a German who invented the printing press. At the other end the enormous growth in the Departmental work of Governments and their inability to know their own minds sometimes, or a sense of thoroughness that goads them to delve down into the depths of truth has so increased printed matter, that to the intellectually inclined, life has become an amazing maze of marshalled matter. One definition of a Secretary to Government in *Vanity Fair* comes here aptly to my mind. 'He is first placed on a number of commissions. He enquired into everything, he wrote hundredweights of reports. He proved himself to have the true paralytic ink flux. . . . He would write ten pages where a clod-hopping collector would write a sentence. He could say something over and over again in a hundred different ways. The feeble forms of official satire were at his command. On reaching Simla he was found to be familiar with two local jokes. One of them is about everything in India having its own peculiar smell except a flower; the second is some inanity about the Indian Government being a despotism of despatch boxes tempered by the loss of the keys. . . . The flotsam and jetsam of advanced European thought are eagerly sought and treasured by him.' The bluebooks make blue funks of some people. To the generality of the governed, they are meaningless. To one and all they are intended to create a mystifying halo about that intangible institution called the Government. Yet enlightenment more than mystification is the purpose of books.

It occurs to me sometimes that we live in an age of bookishness more than in an age of books. Knowledge impressed on the brain and stored in it through oral repetition is an intellectual exercise, while sitting luxuriously before a crib, with two commentaries and a book of

lecture notes, slowly dictated and laboriously taken down in class, is at best a manipulation that serves a temporary purpose. With all our intelligence tests, quotients and classification, we place, probably in spite of ourselves, a premium on industry, not infrequently at the expense of intelligence. The definition of genius as an infinite capacity to take pains suffers from a certain amount of subjectivity. We observe in life that there is no parity between intelligence and industry. The less intelligent a man is the more he plods and pulls. If this is genius, in the interest of a high average, it is better to vote for intelligence, which, as a mental spark, may get extinguished by an excess of what is essentially a motorized and mechanical effort and so physical. Whether this can be achieved in view of the great number of books of all kinds that flood the market is more than one can say. Bookishness is distinctly a product of too many books and too little discretion in choosing them. It kills work-a-day intelligence, which is commonsense, with the result that we lose grip of the realities of life and have such sorry spectacles as the brilliant university man who is not able to buy a ticket at the third-class booking office; the first is first-class Lawyer, who fails in practice, and the otherwise prosperous civilian who cannot deliver a brief *impromptu* speech.

For all this I should not be understood as arguing that a pushpin is as good as poetry. I only mean that an improper prescription or selection of books may leave a bookman a bewildered bushman in the complexities of modern life. The book-companies that are the bottle-necks of the publishing firms make our onus of choosing good books infinitely much harder than in the days when books were written by savants solely for the advancement and the implementing of learning and knowledge than for serving private gains or public ends. The consumer of book-values today is caught between intellectual totalitarians and the anxiety of the trader in books to make profits on quick turnover. Their *modus operandi* is to appeal to our instinct of acquisition. Catch-penny books attractively got-up arrest our attention and cloud our judgment. Or else, cooked and cut-to-pattern opinions spiced by thrill, raised to a scientific level are passed on at the expense of truth. The seeker after knowledge has no opportunity to see both sides of the picture, so that he may form his own opinion and hold it even if merely for holding's sake. If education is to serve the purpose of a path-finder in life, it cannot be built on such assumptions without frustrating itself. But in a correct scheme, books would be books, according as they are useful or necessary or enlightening. Even if they are not King's treasures they will be people's friends. Changing the analogy of Addison, who said, 'A good friend on the road is as a coach' we may say a good book in the room is as good as a wife. It is not the big book that is the big mischief as the ancient poet thought. It is the bad one; one that is neither useful, nor necessary nor enlightening. A man may be sized up by his books as much as he can be judged by his looks and friends.

THE VOICE OF THE LUTE

BY B. G. R. KRISHNAMMA, *Hons. 4, Br. vii.*

Everywhere in India, among the snow-capped mountain tops, or the luxuriously wooded plains beneath, or the sanded banks of our swiftly flowing rivers, or beneath the swaying palms flooded in moonlight, or by the side of the azure sea, there is music and rhythm and life, and perhaps no Indian is more truly aware of this than Sarojini Naidu. The lilting music in her poetry which gives it its life, and raises it aloft like a bride borne in a palanquin is perhaps the most striking quality of her verse. In it she has captured for ever the enchanting and colourful music of India, and bequeathed to posterity a gift of great power and beauty. But hers is no mere artificial recording, for to the melody which she has caught from Nature and from her fellow-man she has added a music created by her own talent, something individual, personal, and entirely her own.

Sarojini Naidu, unlike many other great poets, does not repeat the same tune in all her poems, for the lilt of the music and the sway of the rhythm of each poem is in perfect harmony with the subject with which she is dealing. The following lines addressed to Indian Dancers reveal perfectly the voluptuous glamour of an Eastern dance:—

> 'Eyes ravished with rapture celestially panting, what passionate bosoms a-flaming with fire,
> Drink deep of the husk of the hyacinth heavens that glimmer around them in fountains of light.'

If ever there was a secret mystery, a magical strangeness about India like a mirage before a thirsty traveller, it is fast vanishing before the kaleidoscopic onrush of a new civilization. The uncanny gloom and the fairy enchantment, which once surrounded the temples and minarets, forests, rivers and groves of India have almost disappeared like the dream of an awakened sleeper. A painter can capture a beautiful scene on his canvas, and a singer can perhaps recall a half-forgotten melody, but it requires the supreme genius of a poet to feel and record the atmosphere of a nation. This strangely fascinating atmosphere has been captured for all time in the poems of Sarojini Naidu. It is very difficult to point to any single poem of hers to illustrate this quality of capturing atmosphere; I would like to quote her lines addressed to 'Nasturtiums'.

> 'Poignant and subtle and bitter perfume,
> Exquisite, luminous, passionate bloom,
> Your leaves interwoven of fragrance and fire
> Are Savitri's sorrow and Sita's desire.'

In 'Village Song' she describes the primitive terror of a country damsel, who, because she was eagerly listening to the song of a boatman, failed to reach her home after night had fallen. See with what a masterly touch she creates a ghostly and eerie atmosphere.

> 'There are no tender moonbeams to light me,
> If in the darkness a serpent should bite me,
> Or if an evil spirit should smite me,
> Rām re Rām I shall die.'

Sarojini Naidu's poems are also noteworthy for their vivid and vigorous colouring. She is a real word-painter, and wields a brush which is both delicate and accurate. Her powers of observation must indeed be good and her memory for detail retentive. I can almost imagine myself taking a stroll through the bazaars of Hyderabad, when I read the lines

> 'Turbans of crimson and silver,
> Tunics of purple brocade,
> Mirrors with panels of amber,
> Daggers with handles of jade.'

Or what a wealth of colour is revealed

when the gulmohur blossom is compared to

'... the blood that poured from a thousand breasts
To succour a Rajput Queen.'

It is the mark of a true poet that he or she can see beauty in things which are not commonly accepted to be beautiful. Sarojini Naidu possesses this power in no small degree, and this fact alone gives her ample claim to an honoured place in the annals of literature. A poor lonely old woman by the wayside, or an Indian Gipsy 'in tattered robes that hoard a glittering trace of bygone colours,' or a bangle-seller are as beautiful to her as the gulmohur blossom or the princess Zeb-un-nissa. And Radha the Milkmaid, who

'Carried her curds to Mathura fair'

sings with as sweet an accent as the spring

'With butterfly wings, in the wild rose-hedge,
And the luminous blue of the hills.'

Sarojini Naidu with her gift of music, her perception of atmosphere, her sense of colour, her eye for beauty in all things and her knowledge of India's past glory has captured for ever a little of the matchless glory of our country which is unfading and eternal.

THE ART OF MR. P. G. WODEHOUSE

By KURUVILLA THOMAS, *Hons. 4, Br. vii.*

When I heard the other day that Lord Wavell enjoys his leisure reading Wodehouse I felt instantly drawn towards him. For here was a soul burdened with the colossal responsibility of prosecuting the war in the Middle East, finding time to take a refreshing dip into the gayer side of things. The effect of Wodehouse on a tired soul is stupendous; that man is a genius, for he has made others live more abundantly even if only for the moment. It is indeed difficult for one to criticise Wodehouse because his personality perplexes the analyst. We know very little, I, at any rate, know almost nothing, about the man. All I know about his private life is that he is rather fond of cycling and that Mr. Beverley Nichols was inclined to call him a cherry. These, every one will admit, are slender clues to one's inner personality!

Mr. Hilaire Belloc was once asked, who, he thought, was the greatest contemporary English writer and he cast his vote for Wodehouse basing his choice mainly on style. When a man can make us read his lines without our being conscious of his style at all, but wholly absorbed in the sense, we say that he writes a perfect style. It is rather like the famous definition of a well-dressed man. We consider a man well-dressed when no part of his dress catches our attention. P. G. Wodehouse, when he writes as himself and not as the mouthpiece of a character, writes a perfect style, for, *as a rule*, we are not conscious of the manner of his writing at all; we do not pause to look at the construction of his sentences or the grouping of his clauses. Why? Because our minds are totally absorbed in the story itself. But we do feel something; it is but a smooth, effortless, flowing motion. But the genius of Wodehouse does not permit one to cast aside his style so easily. There are occasions when he wants us to pause and laugh over a word or a phrase or a sentence. And when we come across his dialogues and when the narration is done by a character our minds are at once alert to take in the style as well, for then, though he cannot be said to be writing a perfect style, he is really at his best.

If I am permitted to stretch the simile a little, he is then like a man dressed for the evening, rich, dazzling and inclined to be gaudy. Wodehouse knows that he can work wonders with occasional excursions from the perfect, matter of fact manner of description or conversation. Sometimes we are struck by the extraordinary appropriateness of a word or an idiom, at other times by the use of a line-long compound word coined by Wodehouse himself. Through such compound words and twists of the phrase he brings in a lot of his humour. When Bertie Wooster says that Jeeves came into the room with a 'my-lord-the-carriage-waits' type of look we know exactly what he means. Regard for aptness makes Wodhouse indulge in word-coining. The words from his mint are simply infectious; they often make us rack with laughter and always succeed in conveying the idea to perfection. He is never for the stale, stiff and tiresome Victorian prose, but prefers the ordinary, day-to-day colloquialism. He has exploded the theory that colloquialism and classicism never go together, but has shown that colloquial style can be classical.

To the casual observer his style appears to be quite simple, but one who really sets himself down to an imitation will immediately realize that it is inimitable. One cannot imitate Wodehouse without being Wodehouse himself.

P. G. Wodehouse's native sense of humour is prodigious. And he can transcribe this gift to paper as perhaps nobody has done hitherto. The sense of humour can be defined as the sense of contrast. Wodehouse produces most of his humour by contrasting extremes of individuals or situations. He places elderly, corpulent gentlemen in the most ridiculous situations and tickles us by their struggles to extricate themselves. Or he makes a young man fall hopelessly in love with a girl, but he is either mortally afraid of the female species to find courage to propose, or the girl despises him for a strange hobby of his, say, breeding newts!

Wodehouse has a passion for understatement. He understates the obvious and the strange to such an extent that the effect is heightened to a ridiculous degree. And he relishes the roundabout way of saying things, and, needless to state, it is a chief weapon in any humorist's armoury. Here are two examples of his superhuman ability to use this weapon, and I cannot find better ones: 'His fist shot out and hit the atmosphere', the idea being 'his fist shot out but missed the objective;' or 'Freddie wound himself round a couple of eggs and sandwiches.' But these are only two minor points of his technique.

Then there are his plots. The plots of Wodehouse are in perfect harmony with his style. They are brilliant from the point of view of pure humour and, more or less, as I had occasion to state before, they are a series of contrasting situations. Take Piccadilly Jim: here is a young lord going about London dripping with booze, painting the city red, and for amusement or necessity knocking off the head gear of policemen. He falls in love and the complications which arise out of it form the main plot of the story. Or 'the Girl in the Boat'—The love of Sam Marlowe and his struggles against a cruel combination of circumstances to win his girl are brilliantly conceived.

Wodehouse always strengthens his main plots with equally funny minor plots. An absent-minded earl or the adamant father or a practical minded butler are some of his favourite topics to draw his plots from.

Love is a favourite theme of P.G. Wodehouse. No, not the passionate, consuming love of Brontè or Eliot, but the fickle, momentary type which only will fit in with his style and characters. To imagine that Gussie Fink-Nottle is for a moment capable of real burning passion will be doing that gentleman a great injustice.

It will be both incongruous and inconsistent with the *motive* of Wodehouse. The piquant and hilarious situations into which the thing called 'love' leads the unfortunate young men of his are really the essence of Wodehouse's plots.

If his style is funny his plots are hilarious and if his plots are hilarious his characters are certainly uproarious. Apart from Dickens I do not think there is anybody who has created such a galaxy of immortal characters. P. G. Wodehouse does not represent the true social life of England, but creates an England of his own where dukes freely marry chorus-girls and manage onion-soup bars in Piccadilly and get 'pinched' by policemen for misbehaviour. But Wodehouse is no reformer; he does not profess to give us a true picture. His job is to tickle us by words and characters and this he undoubtedly does. The place of Wodehouse is not on the study-table but by the bed-side on a rainy evening.

Wodehouse limits his sphere mostly to a certain class of society from which he draws characters by the dozen. Most of his young men are aristocrats with too much money and too much spare time on their hands, not knowing what to do with either, rather on the wrong side of intelligence, but harmless and extremely lovable. Take Bertie Wooster, for example. It is doubtful whether there is anywhere in Wodehouse a character who is so lovable and harmless. Here is proof positive to show that Nature is never partial in her distribution of talents. She has fattened his purse at the expense of his grey matter and has made him a puppet in the hands of terrorist aunts and butlers. Nowhere is a person more willing to help others—the code of the Woosters itself is to help pals in need—and nowhere is a person more gifted to bungle and to land himself and others in the soup. But in the end, with the help of the gigantic brain of his valet, he manages to blunder himself and others to 'olives and roses'. Thoroughly well-meaning and well-mannered, straight forward and modest, always ready to be of assistance, Bertie Wooster is a dear.

But if Bertie is ever willing to extend his hand to his needy friends Ukridge is one who is ever in need of such a hand. Impecunious to the limit as he is, he is never lacking in brilliant schemes to strike gold; and he puts his heart and soul into his plans. But Fate, that strange arbiter of human destinies, is always unkind to him, and the final outcome of his madcap schemes is that he finds himself more on the I.O.U. side. But, fortunately, he has a unique knack of making himself scarce from uncongenial situations, asking his friends to hold the baby. Whatever shortcomings he has, lack of perseverance is certainly not one of them. If one plan miscarries there are a dozen others at his fingers' ends. If chicken-farming is not so lucrative as expected there are ducks and if they also flounder there is prize-fighting! Ukridge, ah! who will not instinctively transfer a ten-pound note to the security of an inner-pocket at the very hearing of his pathetic but famous 'I say, laddie'!

Certainly, I am not going to take up every better known character of Wodehouse; there are too many of them—Gussie Fink-Nottle, Aunt Dahlia, Uncle Fred, Mullines, Psmith, etc., etc—to bestow individual praise and recognition. But Jeeves, of course; there is no Wodehouse without Jeeves.

When P. G. Wodehouse breathed life into Jeeves he added one name more to the immortality list of English literature and Jeeves took his place among Pickwick, Falstaff, Sherlock Holmes and others. If we focus the searchlight of criticism and character analysis on the characters of Dickens and Shakespeare, their souls and personality lie bare before us. But Jeeves defies all attempts to pry into his character and he remains in the shady background—a figure of inscrutability and wonder.

Jeeves is the object of infinite admiration and affection of Betram Wooster and the other members of the Drones Club. They know that they can rely on his quick and practical brain in the most trying of situations and Jeeves is at his best and quite at home in an atmosphere of crisis and anxiety. Bertie puts it down to eating fish, but Jeeves's own word for it is that he does not like fish ; it is even said that he once 'shuddered at the mention of 'sardines'. Jeeves preferred to attribute his intelligence to heredity, but it is hard to explain the blossoming of the master-mind in one of such humble origin. Jeeves is always the strong, silent man, but occasionally he gets into a personal note and through such rare events we get a gleam into his ancestry and early life. He appears to have been severely obsessed by numberless aunts, and the experience gained in boyhood and early youth probably explains the uncanny skill and confidence with which he pilots Bertie Wooster through the rocky passage of aunts and other relations.

Jeeves is a versatile genius ; he is an expert on food and clothes, he can recommend a suitable book for any occasion and he has such inside knowledge of the turf that he never backs the wrong horse. His knowledge of gambling and betting must be wide because he is able to add appreciably to his savings by occasional bets and wagers. Jeeves likes to assert himself and keeps a fatherly eye on his employer. And when occasionally Bertie tries to pull himself together and hints at his being the chief, Jeeves's eyebrows shoot up a trifle, or, in other words, he is offended. With all the 'strong, silent man' about Jeeves he cannot stand such affronts and sinks into a melancholic torpor until his wishes are carried out, as invariably they are, sooner or later. A striking thing about Jeeves is his detachment ; he reacts alike to praise and criticism, though he himself has set a limit for the latter. When Bertie praises him for any of his brilliant coups he merely says, 'I am glad you appreciate my assistance, sir.' And when told by Comrade Rowbotham that he was 'an obsolete relic of an exploded feudal system', Jeeves must have been certainly shocked, but his answer was only the polite, 'Very good, Sir. 'He is a master of human psychology, especially feminine, and to its pointing out by Bertie, Jeeves answers, 'Life is like that, sir'. What depth of thought may not be concealed in that remark ?—he only knows ! On another occasion when Wooster says, 'You know all about women, Jeeves', he answers simply and confidently, 'Yes, Sir ;' and when rebuked by his employer for paying attention to a white tie at a moment of stress, the master-mind expresses one of the greatest truths in the philosophy of life. 'There is no time, sir, at which ties do not matter'. That is Jeeves. He is not merely a character, he is an institution !

P. G. Wodehouse is one of the major 'casualties' of the war. Actually he is a prisoner-of-war in Germany engaged in propaganda work for the Nazis. Superficially, it is a very unpatriotic act and it is really poignant to think of a man like Wodehouse who, for the last two or three decades, has successfully striven to hold the English banner high, being engaged in disloyal activities. But, at the same time, it will be foolish and unjust to indict him before giving him a chance to speak for himself. For all we know, there may be a gun prompting him from behind at the microphone. Whatever the reason, it can only be hoped that his case will come up again for public notice and public justice after the war. He made England live more and more abundantly, lifting her up from the sordid world of Banks and Stock Exchange to one of harmless foolery and recreative gaiety. That must be taken into account too.

'IS ANYTHING OURS?'

By M. R. Pai.

Death had descended on Guruva's household. His wife Seshi died while giving birth to his third child. It was a baby boy that did not live to see the world. He had two girls—Rukku and Durga, and it was his hope to become the father of a son. After all girls were—well, only girls. He had been looking forth to this day in the hope of seeing the face of one who would live on this small piece of land and continue the tradition of his father. The day when Thanya—for he had decided to name his son so after his grand-father—would hold the plough and follow the pair of oxen, would see the crowning of his life's ambition. He had seen the vision of himself sitting on the verandah of his small thatched hut, old, toothless, chewing the betel which his daughter-in-law had brought and watching the green fields with ripening corn-fields which his Thanya had sown and which he was going to reap.

Guruva was one of the hundreds of people of his type who were tenants, holding a small piece of land under the petty land-lords. Each land-lord had many tenants. The tenant paid a small sum of money and a certain amount of rice which he had grown, annually to his master in lieu of the land held by him. Whenever there was any ceremony or festival, it was the custom for the tenants to take to their master's house whatever vegetables, fruits and flowers they had produced. He would go with his whole family to his master's house and take part in the festivities. Did not Guruva himself remember how he went as a small boy with his father and mother to the marriage ceremony of their present master?

The girls were crying because their father was himself giving vent to his grief. Try as he would, he could not keep back the tears that rolled down his sunburnt cheeks. 'Father, why are you crying? Why does not mother speak?' What could he answer? He could not expect these tiny tots to understand the meaning of Death.

'Do not cry, my darlings', he told his daughters drawing them close to him and wiping their eyes. He patted them on their backs and smoothed down the dishevelled hair which was tumbling down their foreheads in beautiful smooth curls. There was a choking sensation in him and he felt a lump rising in his throat. It was impossible not to cry. The sight of his weeping children made his grief even more intense.

'We shall not cry if you give us the baby brother whom you promised. We shall play with him and stop crying.' This almost made him cry like a child. Yes, he had promised them a small brother to play with. Whence was he to get him, when both the baby and the mother lay cold and lifeless on the floor? 'Yes, father', broke in Durga, the younger, 'we will play with him with the wooden horse you made for us the other day. It will be nice to see him sit on it, will it not be, father? And we will not cry too.'

Meanwhile, his neighbours and friends had made all preparations for taking the dead bodies on their last journey. Much time is not wasted and a corpse is not kept in the house longer than is absolutely necessary. It was not, therefore, long before everything was finished and they lifted the bier when the children started crying out for their mother.

'Where are you taking her?' cried Durga. 'We want our mother. Oh, mother, do not go.'

Rukku was weeping bitterly. She turned round and asked her father, 'Father, where are they taking her? Why is she going?'

'She is going to God, my darling', replied Guruva in agony, holding back his tears with great difficulty. 'God wants her.'

'But we want her, father. Why should God take her when we want her?'

He was unable to answer. 'How was the child to know that man had no right to wish for what God wanted?' he thought. 'My dear, she is God's. God gave her to us and now he is taking her back.'

'Will she come back, then? When mother went to grand-father's house last time she returned soon.'

'She will not come back, darling. God wants her always.'

* * * * *

The next day dawned bright but the cloud in the heart of Guruva remained. The world had lost all its attractions for him. He came out of his hut and did his morning work. The cows got their hay and water. The fowls got their share of corn. The children got their food too. Everything went on as of old—only, he was not the old Guruva. He came and sat on the dung-swept mud verandah and stared at the photograph of his wife in the small family portrait which he had pasted on the wall. It was taken three years ago during the time of the Paryayam festival at Udipi. The photographer had said, 'A photo for eight annas and in ten minutes!' Who did not want it? It would be a souvenir. He got the whole family photographed. After all, a photograph was worth having—and it cost only eight annas too. Little did he realize then that this faded picture would be the only image of his wife left to him. Both his daughters had taken after their grandmother and only this picture remained to remind him of his Seshi. As he recalled the days of old a few tears trickled down. He heard a sobbing at his side. Turning round he saw his two daughters gazing alternately at the picture and his face, their eyes wet with tears. He impulsively lifted them and kissed them.

'Father,' Durga said after a while, 'Father, do you remember the rose plant which mother planted last week? It has not been watered. If you draw water from the well, we shall water it with our small pots. It was not watered yesterday and mother used to say that it must be watered daily.'

'Yes my dear, I shall,' he answered.

'And, father', the girl added, 'when the first flowers come, we must place them on mother's picture. She loved roses so much'. She lifted her eyes towards her mother's portrait looking down at her.

'Of course, my dear,' and with that he went out to help the children water the plant.

And so the days passed, adding on to each other till they became weeks and weeks became a month. It was now more than a month since Seshi left this world. Time had done its work in healing Guruva's wound and though he had not forgotten—how could he?—he had reconciled himself to this new life and devoted himself whole-heartedly to his daughters. Under their tender care and his expert help the rose plant had grown with time and had put forth a sprout of tender buds. They were just blooming and in another day they would be in full bloom. The joy of the girls knew no bounds. 'Father, the flowers have appeared on the plant. Shall we pluck them and place them on mother's picture?'

'Not now, my dears, we shall do it tomorrow when they will be in full bloom.' The children were impatient and it gladdened his heart to see the children's love for their mother. With various thoughts revolving in his mind he entered his hut when he heard his name being called.

'Guruva, Guruva. Where are you?' It was the landlord's son. Guruva rushed out and bowed low. 'What brings you here, my young master?'

'It is a long time since you came home, Guruva. Ever since your wife died you haven't made your appearance. Because of that it was not possible to tell you earlier. Father was expecting you every day. My sister is to be married . . .' 'God bless her, my young master. When is the happy occasion?'

'She is to be married tomorrow and that is why I came here myself. You have not brought any presents.' 'A thousand apologies. The servant must be excused, for he did not know of this before.' 'Well, anyway, get everything possible tomorrow and come with your children. But just now I want some flowers. Oh, those are splendid roses'. He bent down and sniffed at them. 'Very fragrant, too. I will take those with me now.' He started plucking them when Guruva blurted out, 'Not those flowers . . . .' 'Why not?' the young master enquired and finished plucking all of them. 'They belong to my daughters', Guruva replied. 'What! Belong to your daughters! Surely Guruva, you are not pampering your girls just because they've lost their mother?' So saying, he turned away when the two children came on the scene. They were filled with dismay and chagrin when they saw the flowers being taken away.

'Father, he has taken the flowers', the girls said sorrowfully. He remained silent. 'Why did you permit him to take them? When *we* asked you, you said "tomorrow"'. 'And they were mother's roses too', the other girl added, 'why did you give them?'

'He wanted them for his sister's marriage, dear.' 'But we wanted them for mother. What right had he to take them?' asked Durga angrily. 'The land is his and he is our master. We must give him anything he wants', he explained with a pathetic ring in his voice. 'Then the flowers were not ours? They didn't belong to us?' 'No, everything belongs to him.' 'Father', asked Durga weeping, 'Mother belonged to God and he took her away. The land belongs to the master and he took the roses away. Father, is there anything which is ours? Is there nothing which belongs to us?' Rukku also burst into tears.

'Oh my darlings! Don't cry. You are mine. You belong to me and I belong to you.' They looked at him doubtfully. 'Do we really belong to you?' 'Of course, darling.'

He lifted both the girls up and kissed them.

THE BRAVE TOMORROW

By R. Venkateswaran, 4 *B.Sc. Hons., Br. ii*

God! how time flew! May, June, July . . . now it was August. May! that was a pleasant month, the month which told her she had passed with honours. But after that, inaction, boredom. But it was all different now. Ramnath would be coming and tomorrow too! Like a young Lochinvar, she would be happy, forever!

Life had not gently dealt with her. Married at *ten*, and widowed at thirteen. Not a pleasant thought. No! she would not be gloomy, she had been gloomy enough.

Her marriage! it was absurd, fantastic! She had been dragged from school and married to an anaemic-looking boy. It was all her mother's doing, that terrible scheming mother of hers . . . She looked at the photograph on the wall. Two expressionless faces stared at her. How like an overdressed doll she looked in her absurd sari! Brahman society made its girls look like elderly matrons when they should be lighthearted romps.

She remembered it all—the awful fuss in the house. The traditional pipe and drum, thousands of smoky oil lamps, the

dust, a heavy odour of sandal-wood and rose water, shaven priests droning formulas in weary monotone, the giggles and the nudges. Yes, she had had an uncomfortable time.

But the boy-husband died—of typhoid. With hints and condolences, she had a bad time of that too. They removed her necklaces, her bangles. There was even talk of shaving her gleaming hair off. She resisted, she screamed and won. She was refused flowers, she was not allowed to wear the saffron spot on her forehead.

The only thing left for a young Brahman widow was to prepare to die. The better-class people, however, allowed their widowed daughters to take up some calling, teaching mostly. And so Nalini continued at school.

Most people kept away from her, and she preferred solitude and books to the pitying looks of her unmarried friends. She studied intensely, won a scholarship and left her place for higher studies.

For the first time she was free. And as she grew up she had greater opportunities of thinking what had actually happened to her. And she liked her lot less and less.

* * *

And then it was that Ramnath came into her life. He joined the college as a post-graduate student. They came to know each other well as Ramnath was her mother's nephew. He asserted he had 'advanced views' as every precocious undergraduate does, meaning, he knew his Russell, his Karl Marx and his Freud.

Two years of something very much like happiness. When Ramnath told her that he loved her, she felt guilty, a cold feeling in her heart. She knew how impossible it all was. But Ramnath the iconoclast, brushed her fears aside, asserted they were 'modns' and told her he would marry her at a registry office. And off they would go, to some distant place and live happily ever after.

He was coming tomorrow to settle it with father. That would be heavenly! To be done with her mother's catty friends who would make it a point of condoling with her every time they met! Her mother might not be pleased with these ungodly 'modn' ways, but she didn't care.

Santhamma distinctly disliked her nephew for making a fool of himself. And she had quite other plans for Nalini, for, Prabhakar the wealthy merchant had asked for her daughter's hand. What a nuisance, this nephew was, ruining his chances and others' too! So she had persuaded her husband to send Ramnath about his business. Still one never knew these young men.

So Nalini's father told the young man, when he came, that it was impossible to allow him to marry Nalini, as a more responsible person had asked for her hand. Nalini was shocked. All her dream-castles were shattered. But Ramnath, nothing daunted, assured her that the only thing left to do was to run away together. As she listened to him with guilty pleasure, a tall middle-aged man entered the room, excusing himself.

'Hope I am not too intrusive', he said.

'Oh no, certainly not!', said Ramnath. Nalini recognized the man. He was Prabhakar. She now understood why he was so much about the house lately.

'Well,' Prabhakar began, 'I wanted to talk to you both about a matter that affects all three of us. I had a talk with your father, Nalini,' he said turning to her, 'and I gather that this young cousin of yours has proposed to you. I myself have taken the liberty of asking your father for your hand. Better be frank about these matters. You are intelligent enough and educated enough to understand that marriage is not the silly game played by michievous match-making women.'

Ramnath did not like this; the man's assurance infuriated him. 'May I ask . . . ?' he began, hesitantly.

'What business I have to come barging in, is it?' countered Prabhakar. 'I will

tell you. Do you know what the consequences would be if you were to marry Nalini?'

'O well, the *scandal and what not*. We intend to bolt'.

'*But never far* enough—society will cast you off. I know the society of ours much better than you, as I have the advantage of you in years. Our society will never forgive such a—shall we call it *mesalliance*? Nobody will receive you and you will turn your resentment on your wife. You will accuse her for landing such a fine hopeful man in such a mess.'

'But we love. . . ' broke in Ramnath and Nalini hotly. 'O, yes. I know. Love. But love does not thrive on short commons. It is a hot-house plant that flourishes in an atmosphere of luxury.'

'*We would welcome a life* of hardship. We have our love and that surely is greater than riches?' said Ramnath sententiously.

'You know you are wrong. You talk like a copy book because you have no experience. Hear me, you are too young to marry a woman of twenty. As it is, you will be disappointing your father who is expecting you to marry a nice girl who will bring in a bit of dowry. As for me, *I offer her* a good house, good clothes, comfort and a peaceful if not exciting life. She may not love me at first, but that is not very important. Above all I offer her social standing as my wife, for our society will excuse a rich man doing anything. As against that you offer her poverty, social *ostracism* and, of course, love, as you say. Well it is for her to choose. I bear you no ill-will. Nor am I *jealous*; it is rather too late for me to be jealous, *isn't it? But I* am a lonely man and, well, would like to spend my remaining days more comfortably. Think over what I have told you.'

He went out, closing the door carefully behind him, and a silence fell between the lovers.

'Well' said Nalini.

'An insufferable bounder', growled Ramnath. 'Of course you would not *dream* of handing me the raspberry, would you?' he asked. Obviously he knew his Wodehouse.

'Certainly not, though I have half a mind to'—but she was thinking. 'Don't you think I will be a burden to you?' she asked after a pause.

'*How* can you . . .'

'Give me tonight to think it over', she pleaded.

'Oh, of course. 'Bye till tomorrow.'

What a fool she was, not to know that part of it! She would be a mill wheel round poor Ramnath's neck. There was terrible truth in what Prabhakar said; and to think that Ramnath would come to loathe her! No, she would not marry him, *nor anybody. Her dream of* happiness faded. She went to her room dazed. A frustrated, useless life, this life of hers!

* * * *

The train gave out a whistle that was almost apologetic. Ramnath was sitting in a corner staring at the receding paddy fields, alone and plunged in deep thought.

'MY DEAR, DEAR SISTER'

BY M. THIAGARAJAN, *3 B.Sc.* (*Hons.*), *Br. v*

It was past six o'clock. I was waiting for my *little sister*, to go on our usual evening walk. About an hour before, I had seen her following a beggar who had a monkey with him. She was very fond of monkeys as all children are. Although solemn by nature, she would jump at the sight of any beggar *bringing a monkey*, and would invariably follow him till he left our village. Once or twice, going in

search of her, I had seen her standing near the last house beside the temple, gazing at the monkey till the man and monkey were out of sight.

I started alone, as she did not turn up; and walked slowly towards the tank which was a mile or so away from our village. Scarcely was I out of my village, when, turning back, I saw my little sister running towards me.

'Come slowly!' I shouted and smiled, waiting for her.

'Why didn't you wait for me?' she asked as soon as she was near me.

'I waited, but you didn't come soon,' was my answer.

Then we walked along the narrow path plucking all the wild flowers we saw in the bushes on either side of the path. As usual she began to ask me several questions, most of which I found very difficult to answer—some were absurd, and others, though intelligent, were either too difficult for her, or to say frankly, too difficult for me. Soon we came to the tank, our destination, and sat on a corner of its bank.

Collecting the pebbles around us we began to throw them one by one into the water, and were watching the ripples. Suddenly my sister got up and ran to a part of the bank overlooking a deep portion of the tank as though she had gone mad.

'Uma! Uma! where are you going?' I cried in an excited voice that I could not recognize myself.

She did not stop to reply. I got up and ran towards her. Before I could reach her, she waved her hand and jumped into the water and disappeared. I too plunged into the water to save her.

* * * *

I sat up on my bed with a shriek and found myself in darkness.

'What is it?' cried my mother.

She raised the wick of the lantern. Only then I understood what had happened.

'Dream', I whispered, looking down at the floor with a confused mind. 'Bad dream', I murmured again. 'Uma', I tried to continue, but I could not.

For a minute or two there was absolute silence. We looked at each other's face. My eyes were dim with tears. My mother with a stifled groan lowered the lamp and asked me to sleep. But I could sleep no more. Mother was sobbing. Uma had died only four days ago. And I cursed myself for having increased mother's pain. And hazy remembrances of things past floated into my mind. Although not quite seven years old, my sister was very intelligent. I was very proud of her and more so was my mother.

And I was troubled that she had appeared to me in my dream; for it was a sign that she had not died contented. Though I was not superstitious, still I was afraid, for I loved her much. And I knew at least of one of her unfulfilled desires. My little sister had often asked me to catch one of those small house bats. She was very fond of birds and she used to say that the bat was also a bird. And I never caught a bat, mainly because of my contempt for those ugly little creatures. Forced by her persistency I used to take a piece of cloth and roll it into a ball and go to our store-room and throw it at the bats clinging to the ceiling there, pretending to catch them, till at last, one by one all of them left the room. Then I would tell her that nobody could catch the bats and she would go away disappointed only to come and worry me some other day. It annoyed me greatly to think that I had not fulfilled her wish. But soon sleep came to my rescue and carried me away into oblivion.

* * * *

The next morning I rose very late. My mother's pillow was wet with tears. She had no sleep throughout the night.

COLLEGE NOTES

College Day

The annual College Day, which is always an occasion looked forward to by all former students, was celebrated on Saturday, January 15th. In the morning there was a meeting of Old Boys and a breakfast in the old college buildings in Georgetown. In the afternoon there was tea followed by a meeting in the Anderson Hall at Tambaram, largely attended by past and present students. Mr. O. Pulla Reddy, I.C.S., Commissioner, Corporation of Madras, was the Chairman. Proposing the toast of the college, Mr. Pulla Reddi recalled his own happy days spent as a student in this college. The Principal replied to the toast and presented the annual report of the college, which is printed elsewhere. Mr. V. Chakkarai Chetty proposed the toast of the guests and His Lordship the Bishop of Madras replied. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks proposed by the Secretary of the College Day Association Mr. K. Sanjeeva Kamath.

All the Old Boys enjoyed the visit to Tambaram and experienced again how valuable College Day is as a refresher of fond memories and an occasion for reunion with the *alma mater*.

We have pleasure to see that Mr. Pulla Reddi is the new president, and Mr. C. A. Abraham, the new Associate Secretary of the Association. The presence of these comparatively young men on the Committee is perhaps a timely reminder that the College Day Association is not the concern of the literally old boys alone.

Au Revoir

The time has come for us to bid good bye to two members of our staff. Mr. L. N. Subramanian, Associate Professor of Mathematics, is to retire at the end of this year after thirty years of distinguished service in the College, having entered it in July 1914. Besides being a valuable teacher, he has been a prominent figure in the social life of the College. We wish him all happiness and rest in his retirement.

Mr. T. V. Venkatachari, Associate Professor of Physics, who joined this College in 1924, is also leaving us at the end of this term. With his quiet, unassuming ways and good nature, he was popular among the staff and the students alike and will be missed by all. Our good wishes go to him too.

Athletics

We did not receive the Athletics reports from the various secretaries and captains. Lest it should be imagined that we have nothing glorious to report on this front, we hasten to say that the past year has been, as usual, a very successful year for our athletes. We won in the Inter-Collegiate sports; our athletes were mainly responsible for the success of Madras University in the Inter-University sports; we won the Championship at the Madras Olympics; and one of our athletes, E. L. Philip, won in two events at the All-India Olympics at Patiala—the hundred metres and the two hundred metres race. Philip is undoubtedly the fastest sprinters in India at present. J. E. Nelson Isaacs, who also had been chosen from our College, ran well in the 110 metres hurdles and secured the third place. Both these athletes deserve the highest praise for their very creditable performance.

A full account of our athletic activities this year and the list of winners in the Inter-Hall sports will be published in our next number.

PRIZE LIST FOR 1943

FIRST CLASS

The Lord Pentland Prize	...	L. B. M. Joseph.
The West Coast Prize	...	L. B. M. Joseph.
Amjud Prize	...	E. M. Tharakkan.
Group i	...	K. S. Swaminathan.
,, ii	...	K. V. Murthyvelu.
,, iii	...	A. R. Natarajan.

SECOND CLASS

The Junior Miller Prize	...	K. R. Bhote.
The Mathai Prize	...	Daniel John.
The Craig Prize	...	No award.
Illayalwar Chetti Silver Medal	...	V. S. Krishnan.
The Chinnaswami Pillai Prize	...	A. J. Ganesan. V. Ganesan.
The Rajagopala Rao Prize	...	C. G. Ramasubbu.
Group i. The Ramiah Gold Medal and Prize	...	S. Krishnamurthi.
,, ii.	...	G. J. S. Rajasingh.
,, iii. The Amjud Gold Medal	...	V. Karthikayan.

III B.A.

The Gunn Gold Medal	...	K. Varugis.
The Kora Eapen Prize	...	G. Luke.
The Ethiraj Pillai Prize	...	A. D. Selvaraj.
The Rajagopala Rao Prize	...	K. P. Narayana Rao.
Group i.	...	M. Ramamurthi.
,, ii. The Sir Krishnan Nair Prize	...	A. V. Narasimha Rao.
,, iv. The Russel Prize	...	(1) Miss B. Pinto. (2) P. R. Leelakrishnan.

IV B.A.

The Miller Gold Medal and Prize	...	S. N. Raman Nambissen.
The Elizabeth Miller Gold Medal	...	No award.
The Ripon Gold Medal	...	M. Basheerullah Farukhi.
The Setupati Gold Medal	...	K. Rajagopalan.
The Sanskrit Prize	...	B. A. Balachowdiah.
The Skinner Gold Medal and Prize	...	T. Srinivasa Mudali.
The Rajagopala Rao Prize	...	T. Srinivasa Mudali.
Group i. The Ross Prize	...	T. Srinivasa Mudali.
,, ii. The Aberdeen Prize	...	S. N. Raman Nambissen.
,, iv. The Thurso Prize	...	M. M. A. Gaffoor.

III B.Sc.

Group ii. K. Gopalan.
,, iii. V. S. Padmanabhan.
,, iv. A. R. Shamaraj.
,, v. P. N. Rajappan.

IV B.Sc.
Group ii. N. Ganapathy.
„ iii. A. V. Krishnan.
„ iv. P. D. Varadarajan.
„ v. Edwin Rose.

HONOURS CLASSES

The Morren Gold Medal and Prize	...	P. T. Venugopal.
The Miller Philosophy Prize	...	Jacob Kumaresan.
The Kellet Prize (English)	...	Godwin Rose.
„ „ (History)	...	K. J. Natarajan.
The Elizabeth Miller Prize (for Scripture Knowledge)	...	No award.
Peter Cator Prize	...	No award.

SPECIAL

Hoare Prize	...	M. K. Ramakrishnan.
Miller Centenary Medal and Prize	...	R. Krishnamurthy.

BOOK REVIEWS

Students and Society. Madras Christian College Rural Service League Publications. Edited by Dr. M. S. Adiseshiah, M.A., PH.D. Published by the Christian Literature Society. Price As. 1½.

In this attractive little pamphlet the author shows how the academic studies of the present-day student have to be correlated to social service especially in villages, if he is to become a useful member of society. The reader will find the account of the actual rural uplift work carried on by students in the villages in and around Tambaram quite interesting. From the pamphlet it may be seen that commendable progress has been made in respect of social study, social service and social organisation, and that an era of effort in the right direction has already begun.

K.J.M.T.

The Journal of Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute, Vol. IV, No. 2, for July—December, 1943, maintains its high tone of profound scholarship and research. Dr. K. C. Varadachari's article on psychology in the minor Upanishads makes it clear that our ancestors had made scientific researches into the mystery enshrouding the physiology of the unborn child in the womb and also of the various vital breaths in our human system. The Director, Sri Ramanujaswami, has focussed attention on the much vexed question of Bhāsa's Prakṛt. One would wish that he had not hesitated to set forth his opinion that the dramas are genuine and that they must have been almost contemporaneous with Bharata and Pāṇini or must have immediately followed them.

Sri M. Ramakrishna kavi's introduction and notes on Chākṣuṣīyam—an interesting primer on Arthasāstra—will be very useful for those interested in the date of Kauṭilya. The same scholar's articles in Telugu assess the contribution of Andhra lyrical poets like Thyagaraja to South Indian music. Excellent specimens of 'Sankīrtan' emotional literature of the 'Tallapāka trio' are provided. How another trio, Nannaya, Tikkana and Erra Pragaḍa enriched Telugu by their 'prouḍha purāṇakavitva' is discussed by Prabhākara Sastri. The article on the date of Manicka Vasagar approaches the

vexed problem in a very commendable manner and fixes the date as 9th century A.D.

One would wish that 'printer's devils' in such an authoritative research journal were not so numerous. Altogether a very useful production.

U. V. R.

HALL REPORTS

Bishop Heber Hall

This term has been one dominated by Athletics. Once back after Christmas we lost no time in setting things on the move. Our one great concern of the term as a Hall was the Sports—Hall and College. Mr. Nelson D. D'Sena was nominated as the Sports Captain and he got to work very efficiently. We had our Hall-Sports on the evening of the 13th of January. It was a holiday but because a considerable number of students had special classes on that day, we could not have a whole afternoon for ourselves and make a function of the Hall-Sports, as is our tradition. The proceedings were lively and at the end of the day we were certain—if ever it needed a reassurance—that the Inter-Hall Championship shield was ours this year also.

A brief and delightful change was provided by the Hall-Days of our sister Halls. We heartily congratulate both Selaiyur and St. Thomas's Halls on their very successful Hall-Days.

By and by came the 4th of February and College Sports. Our athletes did brilliantly. There were not many events in which we did not score the first place. We claimed all the new records set up this year.

Indeed in the sphere of athletics and sports we tower aloft not only in Tambaram but in the whole Presidency. Look up the reports of the Madras Olympics, the Inter-Varsity Sports or the All-India Olympics; the sportsmen who win the trophy for our College, for our University and distinguish themselves from our Presidency are our athletes. Granting their wider allegiance to the College, we are rightly proud in claiming a share in their honour for Heber Hall.

Thus the year is drawing to a close, a year as bright and illustrious as any other in the annals of Heber Hall. I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues on the Hall Committee, and we thank our members for their unstinted cooperation in our undertakings. Whoever our successors may be we assure them that with 'heart within and God overhead' and with such a warden and sub-warden as we are now happy to have, it shall never be difficult to keep the standard of Heber flying and its traditions clean. As for our senior students, to wish that they might prove themselves to be worthy of Heber in the coming examinations and 'in the wider arena of life outside these College walls', is, I am sure, the best wish with which we can bid them farewell.

So now, Cheerio! Good-bye.

G. R. Karat,
General Secretary.

Selaiyur Hall

Hallo, Everybody! This is Selaiyur Hall calling, wishing its readers good luck and good wishes.

We begin this bulletin, last of its kind, giving God thanks for all blessings to us during this year. We are grateful to Him for all opportunities of service and study, achievements and failures, which have taught us much that is useful and enduring.

The glorious success of our Hall Day and our superb entertainment will for ever remain a shining page in the history

of Selaiyur. We owe a good deal of it to the Giver of all things great and good, and the hearty cooperation of every one belonging to this Hall who worked heart and soul as every Selaiyurian may rightly boast now. We wish to extend our grateful thanks to Mrs. Sathianadhan for presiding over the function.

We congratulate Bishop Heber for winning the Inter-Hall sports and condole with St. Thomas's for losing the Basket-Ball match. I may mention that we lost against the former and won against the latter. St. Thomas's Hall deserves congratulations for its success in indoor-games.

We elected our new Hall Committee on the 21st of February and everything went off in a quiet and good-spirited way and we wish them all success in their office next academic year. After a merry, exciting and frivolous time early in the term, we have quietly settled down to our work. The juniors are eagerly looking forward to the holidays and a happy time at home and the seniors are rigorously getting ready for the impending encounter. We wish them the very best of luck and success in their endeavours.

It is good to see our little friend, Malcolm Fraser, walking with support and when we come back after the summer vacation we expect to find him on his father's job of going his 'regular rounds'.

We have had this year a couple of interesting Hall bulletins and before we close, let us congratulate Under-Officer Singaravelu and Sergeant Chandy whose untiring effort won for their platoon the Inter-Platoon all-round efficiency shield.

We are sorry to know that Mr. L. N. Subramanyan is leaving the College after long years of useful service both to the College and to our Hall. We wish him a quiet, happy and peaceful time in his retirement.

Wishing you all a very very happy holiday.

Good-bye everybody.

R. K. Samson,
General Secretary.

St. Thomas's Hall

Of our activities during the present term, nothing is unknown except that of late we are consuming enormous quantities of current and water, the former to heat the brain and the latter to cool it down. Perhaps the Hall-Day needs mention as the major event of the term. Mr. M. P. Pai, I.C.S., our chief guest, being an old boy of the college, it gave the Principal substantial material to talk about; although Mr. Boyd could not say for certain whether Mr. Pai was free from the usual vices of students—as stamping on the floor, sleeping in the class and the like, he could say for certain that Mr. Pai had managed to dodge being caught. The chief guest recalled memories of his college days in Georgetown; he said he vividly remembered the endeavours of a hardware merchant in vying with the professors to make himself heard. With Mr. Macphail as the guiding spirit behind the Hall Day, the function began punctually and terminated sufficiently early so that the distinguished guests could not miss the last train.

When we consider the epidemic of functions that we have had to wade through, and the precious hours lost in hearing speeches, in watching others getting their shields and prizes and seeing entertainments which do not entertain, examination at the end of the term appears quite inappropriate. However, the call to duty will be answered, exhausted though we be, and it will be answered cheerfully too.

A word about our success in sports. It was with difficulty that we maintained the *status quo* in this sphere of activity. We have every reason to be proud of the calibre of our athletes despite the fact that it is no match for that of the All-India champions hailing from Bishop Heber.

Those of us leaving the college record here our deep sense of gratitude and thankfulness for the happy and useful

years spent in Tambaram. For the teachers, we are only one of several generations of students who yearly pass under their care, whereas for the students there is only one generation of teachers. They will always live and grow in our memories.

ABRAHAM JOSEPH,
General Secretary.

SOCIETIES

Christian Union

The third term marked the climax of all our activities. The Student Missionary Union worked with increasing zeal this term. They had three Missionary Breakfasts when Mr. M. M. Thomas, Mr. S. J. Doraisamy and the Rev. Canon A. Manuel spoke to them of the Missionary call in India. Mr. M. M. Thomas spoke about the extensive work done in Kerala. Mr. S. J. Doraisamy spoke about the work of the National Missionary Society in India. The Rev. Canon A. Manuel spoke about the Mass Movement Evangelisation in the Trichinopoly District. Prayers were offered by the S.M.U. members every Wednesday morning for the various Missionary enterprises in India.

The social activities of the Union started again this term with the usual zeal. Sunday Schools are being regularly conducted in Pallavaram and Tambaram under the able guidance of Mrs. Macnicol. The annual day of our Sunday Schools will be held on the 5th of March, when Mrs. H. S. Charles will speak to them. On this occasion prizes will be distributed to the children who secured places in their religious tests. Members are feeling more and more the call of the villages and members of the Union are co-operating whole-heartedly in all the activities of the Rural Service League. Some of our members intend attending the Summer School organized by the Madras Youth Council for training in rural and social work. This is to be held in Tambaram from 3rd to 24th June.

Four Study circles existed during this term. Students ought to see the need for study and to understand that study is the prelude to action. I request students to attend the Study Conference to be held in Tambaram from the 14th to the 24th June, so that next year the study groups may be more successful.

We had a Devotional Service on 16th January when Mr. M. M. Thomas spoke on 'The Christian faces the World'. The Week of Witness for this year was observed from Sunday the 13th to Saturday the 19th of February. Daily prayers were held during this week in the various Halls. Mr. A. M. Palmer of the Meston Training College spoke to us on Wednesday the 16th and Saturday the 19th February on the subject 'Christ as an Indian Guru'. Messrs. Samson, John Ramakrishnan, Abraham Joseph, Luke, Gopal, S. John and Daniel from our College witnessed in various City Colleges. The Week came to a close with a Dedication Service in the Bishop Heber Hall Chapel. Sunday the 20th February was the Universal Day of Prayer and Messrs. Selvaraj, Gnanasundaramani and Sathianathan were the student-speakers on that day in some churches.

The lady members of our Union had Religious Discussion Groups on Wednesday mornings and co-operated in the work of the Union.

We were privileged this term to have Rev. A. Ralla Ram, the National Secretary of the India, Burma and Ceylon S.C.M. He spent the 3rd of February visiting students and members of the staff. He had tea with the Committee and he was highly impressed with all the work done in Tambaram. In the evening he gave an enlightening talk to the

members of the S.C.M. about 'Students and Political Action.'

Our Union co-operated in all the activities of the Provincial S.C.M. Mention must here be made of the encouragement received from Miss Elizabeth Pothan, the Provincial Secretary. Many items were contributed by us including one from women members, to the 'College Pudding' the annual benefit Entertainment of the S.C.M.

An important but silent feature of our work of which we are very proud, is the 'Inner Groups' working in the various Halls to deepen the lives of its members. Post-war India needs men and women of character and the S.C.M. is proud of helping towards providing this need of our Motherland.

I thank all members of the General Body and the Committee for co-operating with me during the whole of this year. We pray to God that He may shower His Blessings more abundantly on the Christian Union of our College.

H. F. J. Daniel,
General Secretary.

Mathematics Association

During this term three meetings were arranged. Mr. Ramachandran, P.G. I., spoke on 'The History of Mathematics' on 20th January 1944, when Mr. T. Ramakrishnan was in the chair. Sri S. Balasinga Satya Nadar, M.A., M.L., LL.M., spoke on 'Mathematical aspects in everyday life' on Monday, 14th February. The valedictory address was delivered by Mr. K. Chandrasekharan, M.A., M.SC., on 'Cantor—A Paradise Lost'. On these two occasions Prof. L. N. Subramanian, M.A., L.T., was in the chair.

Members of the association and the staff gave a farewell party to the retiring Prof. L. N. Subramanyan on 28th February 1944. Rao Bahadur S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., kindly presided.

N. Krishna Murthy,
Secretary.

Physical Science Association

The first meeting of the term was held on Thursday, the 3rd February 1944, with Dr. Anantakrishnan in the chair. The address was delivered by Dr. K. Venkataraman, Mody Professor of Chemical Technology, Bombay University, on 'The organisation of a dyestuff industry in India'. Dr. Venkataraman stressed the vital importance of the dyestuff industry in the national economy of our country. The President in his concluding remarks referred to the remarkable success achieved by Russia in the course of the last few years and posed the query why it should not be possible in India.

Towards the end of the first term two papers were read by Messrs. R. Venkateswaran and P. K. Devanathan on 'Quanta' and 'Low Temperature Physics' respectively. The third of the series of lectures on 'Quantum mechanics' was delivered by Fr. Racine, D.SC. (Paris), on Saturday, the 19th February. The first two lectures took place in the Presidency College. The last two of this series will take place in our college before the end of the term.

C. J. Joshua,
R. Ramana,
Secretaries.

The English Honours Association

The Association started the term with a paper by Mahmood Bin Mohammad on 'Carlyle's Hero-worship'. Deacon Abraham was in the chair. The author pointed out that if we listen to Carlyle we shall each learn to become a little hero in our own place, in our own little way.

The Anniversary of the Association which was celebrated on Saturday, the 12th February, was the high-light of this term's programme. We were indeed sad to miss our beloved Principal from our midst on that occasion. The programme of the evening included a delightful tea-party, a group photo and a meeting followed by a brief but splendid entertainment.

Next time the Association met to hear the valedictory address delivered by Mrs. Parthasarathi of the Queen Mary's College on Tuesday, the 15th February, when she spoke on 'Yesterday and To-morrow'. The Rev. J. R. Macphail presided. Though it had no bearing on the study of English Literature, the lecture was very interesting. Mr. Macphail in his concluding remarks expressed his satisfaction with our activities this year, and we thank him for his kind compliments.

We wish our senior members good luck—both within the walls of the Examination Hall and in the wider arena of life.

MAHMOOD BIN MOHAMMAD,
Secretary.

The Philosophy Association

The activities of the Association this year were limited to three meetings—two of which were preceded by tea. We found it difficult to get speakers to so far-off a place as Tambaram but were lucky enough to persuade three eminent men to address our Association.

All the three speakers of the year stressed the motto of the Union, 'All our knowledge is ourselves to know' from various points of view. Mr. P. N. Srinivasachari speaking on the future of Philosophy and the philosophy of the Future emphatically stated that 'Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal.' Dr. Mahadevan when speaking on the concept of value in Indian Philosophy stated that philosophy is a subject that has risen out of the practical need for life to be perfect and useful. Dr. Boas, on the other hand, showed clearly that man is made not only of body and mind but also of soul, and for a thorough understanding of personality, which is the finished product, it is essential to study all the three aspects.

Our thanks are due to the Philosophy staff, especially to our efficient President and to all other members who with their earnest co-operation have contributed to the success of the Association.

RUKMINI RAMASESHAN,
Secretary.

Economics Association

At the beginning of last term we had a series of extension lectures and seminars by Dr. R. N. Poduval, M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., Professor of Economics, Annamalai University. Dr. R. N. Poduval spoke on 'Industrialisation in India', 'Banking Development in India', 'Problems of Indian War Economy' and 'Some Aspects of India's International trade'. He led two seminars—one on 'The Beveridge Scheme and its applicability to India' and the other on 'Welfare Economics'. All his lectures were very scholarly and widely appreciated. After that, two of our students led two seminars. Miss Devaki read a paper on 'The Population Question' on 26th October 1943 and Mr. K. T. Ramakrishna read a paper on 'Industrial Organisation in India' on 4th November 1943.

This term we had four seminars and one public lecture. Early this term, on 10th January, Prof. Rudra, M.A., Economic Adviser to the U.P. Government, spoke to us on the present and future economic problems of India. The lecture was very interesting and instructive. On 18th January Mr. M. S. Venkatramani read a paper on 'Relief of Rural Indebtedness in Madras Presidency with special reference to the role of Land Mortgage Banks'. On 25th January Mr. M. Narasimha Rao read a paper on 'War-Time Prices'. On 1st February Mr. K. Ramu read a paper on 'Trade Unions'. On 16th February Mr. C. Balakrishnan read a paper on 'Labour legislation'. Before the end of the term, we hope to have our valedictory address.

The record of the work we have done is not at all bad for an infant society like ours, and we hope our successors will work still more enthusiastically and bring out

Inter-Collegiate debate held in the Loyola College on Friday the 21st January for the 'Chettinad Cup', our college was represented by Messrs. Chidambara Thanoo and Govinda Rao.

On Tuesday the 27th January, Sri M. Arunachalam, M.A., a Tamil scholar, addressed the Sangam on 'Folk Songs'. Sri T. Chidambara Thanoo presided. In the debating contest held on Tuesday the 1st February, Messrs. I. D. Chidambaram and V. Karthikeyan were selected to represent our college in the contest for the 'Thiru V. K. Diamond Jubilee Cup'.

The next important meeting of the Sangam was held on Wednesday the 2nd February under the Chairmanship of Rev. Arulthangiah when Sri A. S. Gnana Sambandam of Pachaiyappa's College delivered a very humorous and inspiring address on 'Tamil Magalir'. Sri P. Alalasundaram Chettiar welcomed the guests and Sri M. S. Narasimhan proposed a vote of thanks.

On Monday the 14th February, an oratorical contest was held in the college and Messrs. Govinda Rao and M. S. Narasimhan were awarded Sri V. A. Ramachandran's Cup and prize respectively. In the contest held for the Tamil Sangam prize, Chidambara Thanoo and Karthikeyan were successful. Messrs. M. S. Sabhesan, T. K. Rajasekaran and M. A. Thangaraj acted as judges.

We feel glad to mention here that in the Inter-Collegiate debate held on 16th February under the auspices of our Sangam for the award of 'Sri Pennathur Seshiah Rolling Cup', our college stood a close second, the winning team being that of Pachaiyappa's.

The anniversary of the Sangam was celebrated on Friday the 18th February. Rao Sahib S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, B.A., B.L., presided over the meeting and Sri M. Varadarajan, B.O.L., of Pachaiyappa's College delivered the valedictory address. Instead of the tea party which had to be cut out in view of the food situation in the country, oranges and flowers were distributed to the audience.

A general body meeting of the Sangam will be held on Thursday the 24th February to elect the office-bearers for the year 1944–45.

In all the meetings held this term attendance was encouraging. We thank all the students and the staff for the interest and the spirit of co-operation evinced by them in Tamil and the crowded activities of the Sangam and we wish the new office-bearers every success in their term of office.

M. S. NARASIMHAN,
K. KUPPUSWAMI,
Joint Secretaries.

Samskrit Association

An Inter-collegiate recitation contest in Samskrit was conducted on 2nd February 1944 by the Samskrita Sangham for the award of the Pennathur Visalakshi Ammal Rolling Cup. Rao Bahadur S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer, M.A. (Retired Professor, Pachaiyappa's College), Mr. A. R. P. Francis, M.A., Miss S. Joshua, M.A., and Mrs. K. R. Janamma (Samskrit Lecturer, Women's Christian College) acted as the judges. Select passages from either Vikramorvaśiya, Act IV, or Venīsamhāra Act III were recited with music and acting by the contending teams representing Loyola, Pachaiyappa's, Queen Mary's and Christian Colleges. Each of these colleges was represented by two teams. The judges decided that the cup and the certificate of merit be awarded to I. Suryaprakasa Rao of Loyola. K. Umamahesvaran of Loyola and S. N. Rajan of Pachaiyappa's were adjudged the second and third respectively. Book prizes were awarded to all these three and also to the two lady students from Queen Mary's by the President of the Samskrita Sangham.

After distributing the cup and the book prizes, Rao Bahadur S. K Yegnanarayana Iyer exhorted the students to take keenly

to Samskritic studies that would provide the proper corrective to our attitude in life. Mr. U. Venkatakrishna Rao, the president of the Sangham, proposed a vote of thanks.

Sri S. Tiruvenkatachariar, M.A., L.T., delivered a very interesting lecture on 'Characterisation in Mālavikāgnimitra' on 26th January 1944. The meeting was well attended and the lecture well appreciated.

Rao Bahadur S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer delivered a lecture on 'Select Similes in Vikramorvasiya' on 15th February 1944.

A. P. Brahmam,
Secretary.

Malayalee Association

Since the last report, two more meetings were held in the second term. One was a symposium on 'The part to be played by youth in the creation of a new world order' with Mr. K. R. Chandrasekharan, M.A., M.Litt., presiding. The next was a talk by Mr. V. Titus Verghese, M.A., on 'The progress of Malayalam literature during the last hundred years.' Mr. A. M. Varki, M.A., B.L., was the president.

Mr. K. M. George, M.A., presided over the next meeting when Mr. David V. George gave a brilliant lecture on 'Youth and Literature'. After the lecture Mrs. David V. George sang a few songs which were greatly appreciated.

Two condolence resolutions, one on the death of Mr. M. R. Nayar and the other on the death of Rao Saheb O. M. Cherian, were passed in two different meetings of the Association.

We celebrated our Anniversary on the 18th of February with Dr. Miss Mary Philip, B.A., M.B., B.S., in the chair. Sri G. Ramachandran of the *Indian Express* gave a stimulating talk on 'United Kerala'. The Annual Report was presented and approved of. The meeting was made lively by a comic recitation by O. T. M. Nambiar and a song by C. K. Ramachandran. It concluded with a brilliant speech from the chair, followed by the singing of Deseeya Ganam by students.

We take this opportunity to wish Mr. A. M. Varki, our president, complete recovery from the illness from which he has been suffering for some time past.

In conclusion, we thank the various ladies and gentlemen who co-operated with us and made our work a success. And we wish the best of luck to our successors.

M. G. George,
P. Samuel Philip,
Secretaries.

Andhra Bhashabhiranjani Sanghamu

At the end of the second term Sri B. Rajanikanta Rao sang to us some fine lyrics, with Janab Ali Raza on the *sarangi*. And this term, Sri Prayaga Narasimha Sastri unfolded to us the simple and eternal beauties of folk music. Later on, Sri A. Seshagiri Rao delighted us with another music performance. We thank all these All India Radio artistes for their kindness.

On 7th February, Andhra Visarada Sri Tapi Dharma Rao Naidu Garu put forth a powerful plea for 'Progressive Literature'. The 12th day of February was a red letter day when we had the privilege of listening to Mahakavi Sri Viswanatha Satyanarayana Garu. While congratulating ourselves on the success of that meeting, we express our sincerest gratitude to the Mahakavi.

The valedictory address of our Association will be delivered on the 29th of February by Kavithavisarada G. Joshua Kavi.

We brought out the Telugu Supplement to the College Magazine this term and we are grateful to the College authorities for their generous assistance.

This year, we have been more than usually enthusiastic about the Andhra

Cultural Week Celebrations. Our Student-chairman is one of the Vice-Presidents of the Andhra Cultural League and Mr. C. G. Ramasubbu has been entrusted, along with some others, with the editing of the Souvenir of the League.

From the coming year onwards, the membership of our Association will be open to old members. We request those of the present members who are leaving the College, to continue their membership.

Mr. N. V. Krishnamurthy has been elected as the Student-chairman and Mr. K. Subrahmanyam, as the Secretary of our Association for the coming year. We wish them all success.

On the whole, it was a year of unequalled activity and I thank Sri P. R. P. Francis, our President, whose interest has always inspired us, and Mr. G. Jagathpathi, our Student-chairman, for his valuable co-operation. I thank all the members of the Association for their enthusiasm and support throughout the year.

D. Ramakrishna Reddy,
Secretary.

Karnataka Bhashabhi Vardhini Sangam

Sri P. Ramananda Rao, M.A., L.T., Professor of Chemistry, Presidency College, Madras, delivered the inaugural address on 2nd September 1943 in which he stressed the need for developing the sense of humour in Kannada literature and welcomed the endeavour of some modern authors in that direction. Sri K. Narasinga Rao, M.A., L.T., presided on the occasion.

A condolence resolution was passed on the sad demise of Mr. B. Rama Rao, a former tutor of Kannada in this College.

The Association met on 16th November 1943, when Sri Govinda Rao, M.A., L.T., lecturer in Kannada, Loyola College, spoke on the 'Development of Kannada literature'. Sri U. Venkatakrishna Rao, M.A., lecturer in Sanskrit, occupied the chair.

The valedictory meeting will be held shortly.

N. S. Deviah,
Secretary.

The Rural Service League

During this term, there was plenty of work for all our villagers, and the harvest was good. The problems that now confront us are the problems of sudden prosperity, too much spending, not enough saving, failure to pay off debts, a serious fall in day-school attendance, and the neglect of agriculture.

Students have continued to visit the villages daily, in spite of the many counter-attractions. Health has improved, the number of patients treated daily being now only ten. The Youth Leagues are working satisfactorily. The Agaram Road Union (the old Lecturers' Colony Union) has been helping Mapedu village to remove from its present site to make room for Government constructions, and has made the League the spokesman and representative of the villagers to Government. Bishop Heber Hall Union has been helping Tiruvenjeri cheri to obtain ten more acres of land from the Devasthanam. The other ten acres have been divided among the villagers and part of it is under cultivation.

At the Rural centre the cottage industries have continued as usual. The hand-made paper industry has been progressing. Most of our requirements are met from the paper produced by the industry. Only one mess in the College is being supplied with hand-pounded rice because of the high cost. The students in that mess are paying one rupee more per month for this rice. Part of the paddy stock for this year is being taken over to next year; so we shall not be able to pay up our loan of Rs. 3,000 to the College. The spinning department and the spinning school are temporarily and partially

closed down because of the tremendous demand for labour. But cotton grown on our land is being stored, and ginning and carding machines are being got ready for the reopening in June. The poultry department has been working successfully. The poultry societies started by St. Thomas' Hall Union in villages are also working well. At the centre an egg market has been established, and villagers bring 8 to 10 dozen eggs per day for sale.

The paddy sown on the ten acres of land on the other side has now been harvested. The harvest was poor because of the heavy rains and because the College fence was temporarily removed and cattle got in. On other land, we raised gingelly, ragi and black gram. The labour squad has been working regularly at the vegetable garden in our rural centre, and vegetable growing will improve considerably next year. It is not realised by most of our members that every day 40 to 50 villagers are employed in the rural centre and about double that number use the centre daily for many purposes.

On 26th February we celebrated our annual village Mela at the Rural centre. Our members had worked hard for a fortnight to organise the various events. Two hundred babies under two years from our 16 villages were judged by Dr. Thomas and Dr. Roll. Twenty babies won prizes, and all got presents. The Collector, Mr. S. Ranganathan, was the chief guest of the evening. After the exhibition there was a meeting, at which after prayer by a villager and a welcome by the Principal, reports were read by representatives from the villages, giving a brief review of last year's activities in the villages, and a few requests to the Collector regarding particular requirements. The General Secretary also gave his report. The Collector, responding, promised a sum from his discretionary grant and paddy at controlled prices to the league, and assured the villagers that he would consider their requests. There followed a short entertainment by the villagers. The celebrations which began at 4 p.m. ended at 7 p.m.

During the summer vacation all this work will be carried on by the few members of staff and students who will be left behind. The need for continuous and faithful workers in the villages is urgent. We are inviting one of our senior students to come back next year and work as one of the general secretaries of the league. The opening of the weaving section with six looms is our next job. We want money for it. That will be our first charge next year. From the 3rd to 24th June the Second Annual Summer School for training in rural and social work will be run at the rural centre. The daily programme will be as follows:—

(i) 2 hours' manual work daily.

(ii) 6 hours of training in one Cottage Industry—

(*a*) Spinning; (*b*) Paper making; (*c*) Hand-pounding of rice; (*d*) Weaving.

(iii) 2 hours of village visiting daily and collection and study of Rural Statistics.

(iv) Daily lectures on Rural, Social, Economic, Political and Health problems by politicians, rural workers, experts in sanitation, hygiene, agriculture, dairying, co-operation, etc.

(v) Study and discussion groups at night.

The cost of the school will be Rs. 15-12-0 plus Re. 0-8-0 registration. For further information, please write to Mr. G. Abraham, Bishop Heber Hall, Tambaram.

One word to our members: Keep your interest in the rural community undiminished during the holidays. Do what you can to help relieve distress, and promote literacy and health during the holidays in your area.

M. NARASIMHA RAO (*Selaiyur*); M. V. RAMAKRISHNA RAO (*Agaram Road*); MATHAI ZACHARIAH (*Bishop

Heber); *and* M. G. George, (*St. Thomas'*) —*Union Secretaries.*

J. A. Gnanam,
General Secretary.

The Union Society

Sympathetic critics of the activities of the Union Society point out that the number of meetings held this year cannot compare favourably with those held in the previous years. I must point out that the difficulties of getting the services of eminent men and women during this year have been very great. But, undaunted, we launched intermittent offensives and breached the defences here and there. On 12th January Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, M.L.A. (Central), succumbed to our attacks and delivered a long and studied address to an interested audience. Speaking of the 'Puzzles and Solutions for 1944' he surveyed the events of 1943 on the Indian political stage. He pointed out that mere slogans like 'The leaders must be released' and 'National Government must be formed' will not help us. Especially addressing the patriotic students he said 'you must look at matters from a realistic point of view.' The student-chairman presided. On 19th January, Mr. K. Ramakrishnan, who led a students' delegation to Bengal to study the conditions there, described in detail the plight of the poor peasantry and the middle classes in the province. His speech stirred the audience deeply and the Secretary assured the speaker that the Tambaram students would do their best to save Bengal, the land of Indian Nationalism. In this connection it must be mentioned that contributions in cash and in kind were sent to Bengal often during the year.

The secretary sent invitations to all the colleges for an inter-collegiate debate but as the response was feeble the attempt had to be abandoned. Mr. V. K. Ramabhadran and the Secretary represented the college in an inter-collegiate debate held in Law College on 9th February. Though superior talents robbed us of the trophy, we did not fare badly in the contest.

On 23rd February the Anderson Hall was packed to capacity to mourn the demise of Srimathi Kasturibai Gandhi. The Secretary moved the condolence resolution. Sri C. B. Motaiya seconded the resolution in a stirring speech. Rev. M. S. Adiseshiah led a short prayer. Sri K. N. Raj who presided, paid tribute to Kasturbai's loyalty, obedience and patriotism. The Secretary later sent the resolution to Mahatmaji.

Sri C. Rajagopalachari, who was scheduled to deliver the Valedictory address on 25th February, could not do so owing to a clash of programmes.

The Secretary and the other office-bearers lay down the reins of office in the ardent hope that their failings would be pardoned, their difficulties understood and their work continued.

K. R. Sundara Rajan,
Secretary.

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